THE GROUND-HOPPER MAGAZINE

70p

FEB. 1988

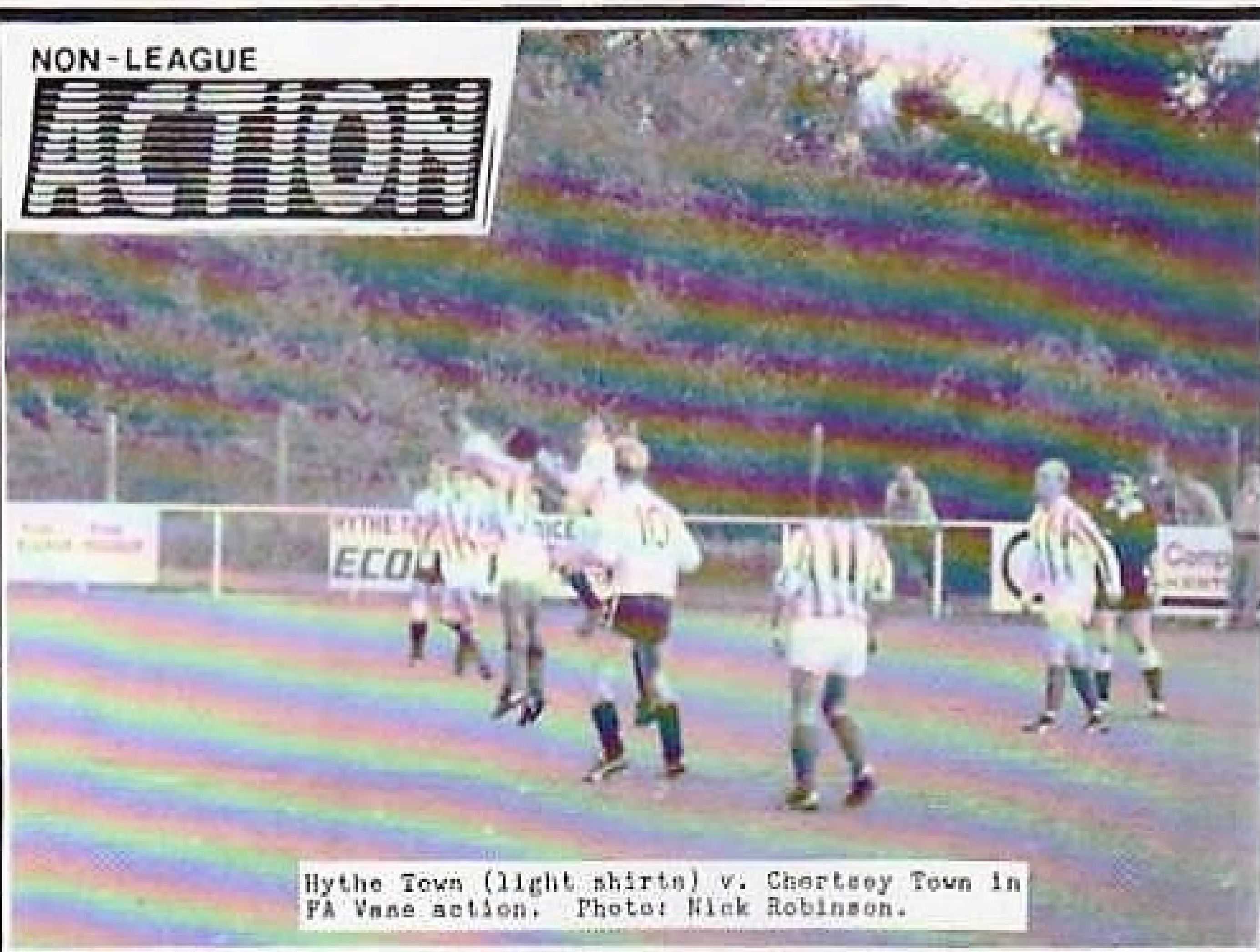


INSIDE YOUR BUMPER 56-PAGE ISSUE

★ 4 PAGE PULL-OUT ON BURY TOWN ★ NEWS
★ SHOP-HOPPING ★ A MONTH IN EUROPE - PART 1
★ CLUB FILE FEATURES INCLUDE ALFRETON TOWN, PONTLLANFRAITH, CAMBRIDGE CITY, WINSFORD UTD.
★ MY MONTH ★ ISLE OF WIGHT FOOTBALL PART II
★ PLUS ALL THE REGULAR FEATURES & PHOTOS ETC.

THE MONTHLY MAGAZINE FOR THE INDEPENDENT NON~LEAGUE TRAVELLER!

NON-LEAGUE ACTION



Hythe Town (light shirts) v. Chertsey Town in FA Vase action. Photo: Nick Robinson.



Action from Leyland Motor's 3-0 home win over Prescot Cables in their NW Counties League Div.1 clash at Thurston Road. Photo: S. Jackson.

THE
GROUND-HOPPER
MAGAZINE

Issue No. 6 February 1988

439 Merton Road, Wandsworth
London SW18 5LB

Please note:
*We **do not** accept telephone enquiries relating to the magazine under any circumstances. All communication **must** be in writing to above address.*

Editorial
Editor: Steve King
Assistant Editor: Ron Jones
Regular Contributors include:
Chris Ashbridge
Tony Middleton
Richard Crabtree
Toby Jackson

Advertising
Display:
Quarter Page:
1 Issue £10; 3 Issues £27
Half Page:
1 Issue £18; 3 Issues £50
Full Page:
1 Issue £35; 3 Issues £90
Lineage:
Free of Charge
See Classifieds Section

Subscriptions
£10 for 12 Issues
Write to: Ron Jones
Subscriptions Department
24 Poplar Road, Wimbledon
London, SW19 3JR
Cheques/Postal Orders payable to:
"Groundhopper Magazine"
Please remember to state which issue you want your subscription to begin

Production
Typing, Production and Design by
Steve King

Accounts
Ron Jones
Bankers: Barclays Bank
The Broadway, Wimbledon
London, S.W.19

Printed by
Wimbledon Copy Bureau
257-261 Haydons Road
Wimbledon, SW19 8TY

Photography
Steve King

COVER ACTION: FA Cup tie at Dareath Heathside as they take on Leatherhead at Merton Road. Photo: Nick Robinson.

COMMENT by Steve King



IMPORTANT NOTICE

We regret to announce that due to the high postal costs in sending the magazine out to the club shops up and down the country that are currently stocking it, GROUNDHOPPER MAGAZINE will, from next month, be available on <u>subscription only</u>. We will not be supplying club shops with the magazine any more, as we are currently losing around £150 per issue by distributing it in this way, and this obviously cannot be allowed to go on.

With commission being paid to clubs who sell the magazine, and about 10p postage per copy on average to send quantities to clubs means that the more clubs who take the magazine, the bigger our losses.

The only way of receiving the magazine on a regular basis from now will be by taking out a subscription. There is an application form with this issue. If you normally buy this magazine at a ground, we urge you to take out a subscription as soon as possible, and you will then receive the magazine for the next 12 months.

Another major change is the announcement that GROUNDHOPPER MAGAZINE and the GROUNDHOPPER CLUB are to merge. Talks are currently going on between this magazine and Steve Pettit who runs the G.H. Club, and as soon as we have more details about the merger, we will bring them to you through the pages of this magazine. The future looks very exciting, and the planned merger means that you will get a brighter, better, more exciting magazine. There are some excellent ideas lined up, and this magazine will have a completely new look starting with our next issue for March 1988. Please turn to page 4 for further details of the new plans and for news of the exciting merger.

Steve King

Merger, mystery and suspense!

The Groundhoppers Club and GROUNDHOPPER MAGAZINE are joining forces to bring you one great magazine! The details of the merger are still at the negotiating stage at the time of writing but we have some exciting plans for the future. The merger will take place at the end of the season, and more details will be given in the months to come. And from next month, your G.H.Magazine will take on a new look, with new features, better layout, and even the cover is to have a facelift with a new style that we hope will be even more attractive than it is now. The announcement of the merger comes after initial talks between G.H.Mag and the G.H.Club, and we feel that with the two respective parties joining forces, a better product will result in the form of a magazine that all Non-League fans will be proud of. So, the scene is set for exciting times ahead. Let us know what YOU think of the merger idea.



News in brief

Cardiff Civil Service, South Gower and AFC Port are three clubs asking for Welsh League status. Ken Tucker, Welsh League secretary said, "It is refreshing to see clubs like South Gower applying. It is a long time since we have received application from a West Wales team."

WHITBY have started work on new dressing and club rooms, costing £30,000. They have already raised £28,000 towards them.

OSWESTRY TOWN, who at the "age" of 127 claim to be the oldest senior club in the country, face closure if they fail to find a new ground before the start of next season.
Oswestry were forced to sell their Victoria Road stadium for £165,000 earlier this season to pay off crippling debts. Plans for a new stadium on the outskirts of the town fell through due to the discovery of a covenant, dating from the turn of the century, which prevented development of the site for anything other than housing.

The experiment of Friday night football seems to have failed in the DNL. Blue Star expected a higher gate for their League Cup match versus Bishop Auckland, but only around 200 turned up.

Spennymoor expect to finish their £110,000 new stand in the near future.

Brandon have delayed the opening of their new Clubhouse until February.

* NEWS CONT'D ON PAGE 43

HOPPING MAD

This appalling article that recently appeared in the Waterlooville v. Andover programme has been sent to us by *Kevin Richards of Nr. Totton, Hunts.* Kevin writes....
I am not a groundhopper but have recently seen your impressive magazine, and I don't know about you, but I believe this article smacks of sheer arrogance, bitterness, and petty mindedness. Everything local football isn't about.
I shall be writing to Waterlooville FC to show my disgust. I would be interested to hear your views and your readers views.

...Well, what do you think? We would be interested to hear your views. All the letters received at G.H.Magazine will be sent to Waterlooville.

Lynn in London

The column by exiled 'Ville fan, Peter Lynn



Ville's goalscoring form this season is undoubtedly going to attract a number of visits from a very strange breed of football follower - "the groundhopper". Instantly recognisable by his duffle coat, shoulder bag and corned beef sandwiches, the groundhopper follows no one club, but chooses instead to travel to as many different grounds as possible (the more obscure the better) and make a nuisance of himself to the "home club". Arriving at least an hour before the kick-off, our friend will buy at least a dozen copies of the matchday programme and then refuse to let you have a copy when you arrive too late and they have all sold out. The sacred proggies will remain firmly in his shoulder bag, wedged between his scrapbook (which he insists on showing to as many people as possible, usually during the most exciting part of the game) and his battered British Rail timetable (apparently, sitting on freezing platforms with broken chocolate machines is half the fun). Owning a car certainly excludes you from this exclusive club (those with an IQ over 25 usually have to undergo an incompetence test before being allowed to join).

Once the game gets underway, the groundhopper will place himself straight in front of the dugouts, while insisting that the respective managers give him the team changes rather than worrying about the game. More often than not he will bump into someone else from the sect, possibly the librarian from Glastonbury that he met at Newcastle Blue Star the previous Monday evening. The rest of the match will then be spent swapping anecdotes about grounds visited in the far flung corners of the globe, each trying to outdo the other. The conversation will occasionally pause to record a throw-in or corner in their notebooks.

Take a look around the ground over the next few weeks - especially at evening matches - and watch out for the strangers who look as if they are on a day out on Wimbledon Common with their shoulder bags and corned beef sandwiches. You will notice how accurate the above description is. Notice also how a great number of them appear as social outcasts. Surely the train spotters of the 1950s, and the 'plane spotters of the 1960s and 70s are now the groundhoppers of the 1980s.

If any of you reading this are groundhoppers, and there must be some here today, why not try to put something back into the game out of which you take so much? Non-league football needs as much help as possible. Go and give your local clubs the same enthusiasm you muster for your distant trips. If you ever have time to actually WATCH a game, you might even find it quite enjoyable, who knows?

Taken from the Waterlooville v. Andover programme.

Tony Williams, Editor of the excellent F.A.Non-League Directory, which has just sold a staggering 14,000 copies, is to produce a new FA approved publication that all groundhoppers will be interested in. It will be an A4 size 400+ page book of Non-League grounds of all clubs in the FA Vase and Trophy, and is due out next November. Tony is still in need of photos of grounds, so if you can supply any, please write to him at *2 ELDER COTTAGES, HATCH BEAUCHAMP, TAUNTON, SOMERSET, TA3 6TH.*
All photos used will show the sender's name, and all can be returned on request. Ground photos are preferable, but if you only have action, these will do so long as the main feature of the ground is clearly shown, such as stand, etc. The book will contain other information such as club badge, how to get to the grounds, maps, etc, plus programmes.

DORCHESTER TOWN have become the latest Beazer League club to announce a major redevelopment of their ground. The Premier Division club say they will be unable to stay in the league if they fail to improve their Avenue Ground and have drawn up a scheme to completely redevelop the site with provision for a supermarket and office building.
The seven-acre site will be split in two. The club retain half for the new ground built with funds raised by the sale of the remaining land.
The club will seek planning permission for a ground that features a 600-seater stand, covered terracing on all sides and a total capacity of 7,000. They envisage a 30,000 square feet superstore.



RICHARD CRABTREE'S HOPPER WORLD NEWS

Practice, not theory

THE trouble with writing for a monthly magazine is that no sooner has one issue been produced than the Editor wants the copy for the next one, especially with Christmas and New Year deadlines looming. Rather than launch into a hurried article about groundhopping in a particular country without the benefit of enough time to research it, I thought I would describe a typical weekend in Europe watching football (if such a thing exists).

The dateline was 19th December, the last Saturday before Christmas, a free weekend football-wise given that the club I support had elected to play on Friday evening and had scrambled three precious points. In the past I had concocted some wildly overambitious plans to do at least four games all in different countries on the same weekend starting in somewhere like Nantes and ending up in Liege, but the thought of such a trip was probably more exciting than the reality of almost non-stop train travel so these plans never came off. The basis of such a trip would be one game on a Friday night, two on Saturday (one afternoon and one in the evening) and one on a Sunday afternoon. This would include a cross-border dash between, say, Moenchengladbach and Venlo or Kaiserslautern/Homburg and Metz on the Saturday and would rely on all trains running on time. Probably why it sounds so appealing....

But I digress. My trip was no more adventurous than a quick hop to Antwerp near the border between Belgium and the Netherlands. A visit to the local British Rail Travel Centre on the Thursday before leaving secured a five-day European Saver to Antwerp for £33 plus a supplement on the Jetfoil on the outward journey. This extra was not absolutely necessary but it did help pass the crossing quicker and allow me to arrive in Antwerp shortly after three in the afternoon, having caught the 08.00 train from London. Watching the sea go by does get boring after about thirty seconds so anything that will liven up the journey such as an interesting book, is recommended.

The first priority on arrival was a place to stay. The Information Centre right outside the station told me the Youth Hostel was shut but gave me directions to a nearby Youth Centre. 500 francs (about £8) for a single room, a couple of hours fighting through the christmas shoppers in an attempt to do some sightseeing, and it was time to go to the first game. Antwerp currently has two teams in the First Division (Royal Antwerp and Beerschot) and one in the Second Division (Berchem Sport) and since Royal Antwerp were league leaders, it was to their ground in the North-East of the city that I headed for the match against Racing Jet of Brussels. The number twelve tram goes all the way from the Railway Station to Royal Antwerp's Bosuil Stadium as it does in the other direction to Beerschot's Kiel Stadium in the South West of the city. On arrival at the ground I bought a ticket for the covered standing area for 300 francs (£4 to £4.50) which turned out to be a paddock in front of a very English-style stand. Seeing that both ends rose very high in order to create a vast bowl, I decided to go to the one end that was open to get a better view. There is a club shop under

the terracing and the view was superb as Antwerp, leading by only 3-2 at half-time, ran in four goals to record a 7-2 win. The remainder of the ground is bench seating. A 48-page large format programme was available for 40 francs.
The next day I travelled back towards Ostend, the port most convenient for train passengers, and got out at Bruges. Since the town has two teams (Club Brugge and Cercle or C.S.Brugge) who play at the same Olympiapark Stadium, there is virtually always a match on on a Sunday in the season. Club Brugge are the popular team and over 30,000 had been present to see Anderlecht play them the last time I had been there. Cercle, by contrast, are supported more by middle-class people, and have a hardcore of only about 2,000 fans. About that number were scattered about the impressive 32,000 capacity ground to see Charleroi, captained by English libero Kevin Pugh, beaten 3-1 in a match almost totally devoid of atmosphere and passion. The ground is modern with two splendid identical cantilever stands facing each other, each with standing room below, and covered terracing at each end. There are two different club shops under the west stand and different programmes are issued. Cercle's contains 24 very large pages and costs only 30 francs.
Having left the match a few minutes early to get the number five bus back to the station, I saw the said bus hurtling past as I reached the main road. This entailed a run of some two miles back to the station for the five to five train to Ostend which connected with the 5.45 ferry to Dover. It also almost entailed a coronary for your scribe who found out just how unfit he was! Nevertheless, the last train from Dover to London on a Sunday evening was caught with at least six minutes to spare and all was well. Unfortunately, my claim for travel expenses was met with stony indifference by the Editor who informed me that the shoestring on which this magazine was run had snapped the previous week.
What a life.....

RICHARD CRABTREE

NEXT MONTH IN... THE GROUND-HOPPER MAGAZINE

Next month sees the launch of a new-look GROUNDHOPPER MAGAZINE. Yes, there will be a new-style cover, a new look to the pages, and some new features too.
Here's just SOME of the great things lined up for next month:-

* Part 2 of Colin Peel's "Month in Europe" feature, with lots of photos, too.
* There will be a new look to our "Club File" features, with even more details of grounds, maps, programmes, photos, etc. Among those featured next month will be: EXMOUTH TOWN, LANCASTER CITY, WITTON ALBION, VALE OF LEVEN (Scottish Central Junior League), and ABERGAVENNY THURSDAYS.
* Instead of the usual 4-page pull-outs, there will be a four page feature on a club inside the magazine's pages, giving just as much information, etc. Who will it be next month? Read the March 1988 issue and find out!
* Our centre pages will now be used for action and ground photos, and the first spread of superb photos will appear next month.
* We'll have that AUSTRALIAN Non-League football feature, held over from this month due to lack of space.
* There will be all the usual features including "My Month", "Shop Hopper", plus all the great letters, photos and news that makes GROUNDHOPPER MAGAZINE the best magazine on Non-League football currently available.
* There will be more news on the merger between the G.H.Club and GROUNDHOPPER MAGAZINE.
* There's Part 1 of a new series on Non-League football in Oxon.
* Plus lots, lots, more!

AND REMEMBER: From next month, you cannot buy the magazine at Non-League grounds. Subscribe today!

THE MONTHLY MAGAZINE FOR THE INDEPENDENT NON-LEAGUE TRAVELLER!

Hopper Post

GET WRITING!

HERE'S YOUR CHANCE TO HAVE *YOUR* SAY. What do you think of the magazine? Do you have any amusing groundhopper tales? Do you have any comments about Non-League Football in general? *Write to:*
Hopper Post, Groundhopper Magazine
439 Merton Road, Wandsworth,
London, SW18 5LB

Dear GROUNDHOPPER MAGAZINE,
Having just received the January 1988 issue of G.H.M. I feel I must write to complain about a particular article. The article in question was one written by Mr. Colin Peel on 'My ten favourite grounds in Non-League football'. It was his worst grounds selection which I considered inappropriate (not that I have ever visited any of these grounds). Your published disclaimant doesn't justify this negative attitude by Mr. Peel and really it does nothing to promote Non-League football. However bad the conditions of these clubs, I feel sure their respective Directors, Officials and supporters, etc are doing their best to improve facilities. To read this article by Mr. Peel must have been soul destroying to them, when we should be attempting to encourage them.
I would appeal to you, Steve, as magazine editor, to consider carefully before publishing this type of criticism in future, otherwise rival clubs could use this excellent magazine to 'slang off' each other. Finally, I hope you take this complaint in the spirit it was intended.
PETER B HINDMARCH, BLYTH SPARTANS S.C. ASS. SECRETARY, 20 KINGSDALE AVENUE, COWPER EASTATE, BLYTH, NORTHUMBERLAND.
Editor's Reply:- Thank's for the letter, Peter. To be honest, we didn't want to feature this type of article in the first place, but as several people had written in with least favourite grounds, we decided to publish to see what sort of reaction we would get. In hindsight, we feel we made a mistake and will, in future, only publish features that promote Non-League football, and in particular, individual clubs. We will leave any controversy and slanging off to other magazines.

- - - - - - - - - - - - - - -

Dear GROUNDHOPPER MAGAZINE,
On Saturday 5th December, with fellow 'Hopper' Brian Jones, I went and visited Pickering Town v. Wombwell SA who play in the N.C. East Div.2, and our exploits might be of some use to anyone who is contemplating visiting there. As we do not have a car, and have to rely on public transport, the first leg of the journey was by Nat. Express coach to Leeds, arriving at 9.15 and a steady walk to Vicar Lane Bus Station to catch the 9.50am Scarborough bus to Malton, arriving at 11.30. Here, we had an hour's wait before catching a number 92 bus to Pickering, arriving at 1.00pm (bus stop outside ground behind Police and Fire stations). The long journey was rewarded by the hospitality shown to us by officials and staff of Pickering Town in us around the ground and the facilities on offer. As the Social Club was not open before the game, they directed us to the nearest pub, for a swift half. The pitch is wired off through posts and there is covered accommodation for about 100 down one side. A 24-page programme was issued, about 50% adverts and 50% information, together with some photos of previous games, and at 20p, excellent value. Pickering Town won a hard but fair game 2-0 but Wombwell, who had a new manager, put in plenty of effort and should not be long before results start

going their way.
After the game, there was just time for another swift half in the Social Club before catching the 92 bus at 4.00pm outside the ground back to Malton and finally reaching Manchester at 9.15pm, but well worth it. I would recommend a visit to Pickering Town to any 'hopper'.
RON BAGSHAW, 24 BURGIN WALK, COLLYHURST VILLAGE, MANCHESTER, M10 8JR.

- - - - - - - - - - - -

Dear GROUNDHOPPER MAGAZINE,
Apart from my fortnightly visits to watch Wimbledon, and my occasional away trips with the Dons, when I can, me and the dog go roaming around the home counties to Non-League football matches. Most games are in the evening so the teams I watch are normally in the Vauxhall-Opel League, but when I don't go away with the Wombles, one young man and his dog, brief case and white stick go to other leagues, where there are grounds I cannot get to in midweek, either because of their distance or because they have no lights. My dog is actually a retired guide dog which belonged to my mother. The dog is an 11½ year old white lab with the name of Broadie. I take her as company and as a helpful guide in the dark, even if only on the lead. The ground I last visited was Gigg Lane, Brockenhurst and I will now tell about my visit. I arrived at Brockenhurst on a train from Waterloo at 1.15, with the kick-off not until 3pm, so I decided to give the dog a run in the New Forest. I arrived at 2.30, paid my 70p entrance and 10p programme and then had a look inside the Clubhouse, mainly to spend a penny. With the bar not open until 4pm, those in the Clubhouse were watching TV or playing pool. As for the ground, there were two stands, an old wooden one behind the near goal next to the tea bar, with a capacity of 70, and the other along one side of the pitch above the dressing rooms, having four long rows of wooden bench seating for 150. With concrete hard standing behind the near goal and up to the main stand, and on the side was just grass. With the capacity of Grigg Lane something in the region of 1,800 with 250 being covered bench seating, it is quite small but compact. They have ten pylons, each with 3 lights, making a total of 30. A supporter told me that they obtained the lights from Southampton 7 or 8 years ago.
As for the game, it was a Wessex League match, which the ex-London Spartan League side won 3-1. Thatcham scored in the 33rd, 60th and 61st minutes and with Brockenhurst scoring in the 35th minute. With the attendance being around 50, the programme had 20 pages, 9 of these being ads, the front card cover showing the name of the club and ground, and giving the name of the club sponsors. Also there was a picture of a badger all in blue ink on white. A nice programme to go with a nice and friendly little club, and ground. One thing that did surprise me was the cattle grids around the town, and even one in the entrance of the football ground. The reason for these were so that the ponies in the New Forest would not go onto the main roads and get run over.
Sorry I could not send any photos of the ground due to my visually handicapped reasons as I am not very good in taking photos in such bad conditions. And as for the dog, she took more interest in making friends with the ponies than watching the football.
So, in total, a nice afternoon out, especially as I had time to have a wander into the New Forest.
J STANCOMBE, 3 WESTLANDS TERRACE, BALHAM, LONDON, SW12 9PD.

- - - - - - - - - - - -

Dear GROUNDHOPPER MAGAZINE,
Being a South Liverpool supporter, I recently attended the 3 matches v. Lincoln City in the FA Trophy.
In the 2nd replay at Lincoln, a strange decision by referee Mr. Makin greeted us during the second half. A South player booted the ball towards the Lincoln area, the City goalkeeper came out to meet the ball, the only player around was an oncoming South player, but with the ball bobbling in the mud, the 'keeper bent down and touched the ball with his hand, realising he was outside the area. He raced back to his goal and I expected a free kick and maybe a booking for the goalie. The referee not only didn't book him, he waved play on. Can anyone explain that? With luck like that, Lincoln have their name on the FA Trophy already this season!
PAUL COTTIER, 3 BEXHILL CLOSE, SPEKE, LIVERPOOL 24.

MY TEN FAVOUR[ITES] IN NON-LEAGUE

As a regular supporter of Wealdstone FC over the last 22 years my travels have taken me to 138 different Non-League grounds, in addition to 48 of the Football League grounds whilst straying to savour the delights of Chelsea pre Dave Sexton's mutilation. Picking ten favourite Non-League grounds is no easy task as so many hold different memories, but here goes:-

1) BOSTON UNITED: This is quite simply the finest ground outside the Football League as anyone who has been to York Street will testify. If the club could match what they have created in bricks and mortar with a comparable team, it would be soaring up the Football League by now. The only criticism has been the demise of the Club Shop on safety grounds in recent seasons.

2) BURNHAM: The second Qualifying round of the F.A. Cup in 1975 took us to the then Hellenic League club Burnham. A month later we were to go down 4-3 to Third Division Aldershot in a later round, but at Burnham it was Wealdstone as the Southern League Premier division side who were possible giant-killing victims. A crowd of 892 at The Gore made it an occasion to remember with the home club supplying everything from Scots pipers to refreshments for all, way beyond their normal capabilities. The effort put in to make us welcome gives Burnham a place in my top ten.

3) BOSTON: No, I haven't repeated myself! A pre-season Friendly in August 1975 took us to the Midland League Champions most recently seen in the Northern Counties (East) League. In 80 degrees of sunshine the home side put 4 goals past us as well as hitting the woodwork twice, but what I most recall was the finest playing surface ever witnessed described in our loca[l] paper as .."only the presence of the goalposts belied the fact that it was not a bowling green".

4) FRICKLEY ATHLETIC: Perhaps the eeriest atmosphere I have experienced was on a freezing winter afternoon at South Elmsall. The fog was so thick that one could not see the width of the pitch never mind from one end of the pitch to the other. Having ventured round the ground for a hot drink only the shouts of our die-hard supporters behind the far goal informed me that we had scored. A small fire started near the players' tunnel added to the lack of visibility and the famous slag-heap running the length of one side of the pitch cast a ghostly silhouette over the proceedings. What springs to mind even more than the strange atmosphere of this match was th[e] welcome given to our travelling fans - pies and black pudding to reward us for our perseverance in reaching the game with the compliments of a very courteous club which hopefully will soon be back in the Conference.

5) GLOUCESTER CITY: The first leg of the Southern League Cup Final in Apri[l] 1982 saw a 2300 crowd assemble at Horton Road to provide an electric atmos-phere for a prestigious occasion. Our 19-year old full-back won the game with a volley from the edge of the penalty box. His name? None other than Stuart Pearce now Captain of Nottingham Forest and an England Cap. This ga[me] in a huge stadium was one of the tensest I can remember and I witnessed o[ne] of the best ever goalkeeping performances from Ray Goddard to set us up f[or] the second leg.

6) FARNBOROUGH TOWN: I was really impressed on my only visit to Cherrywood

ITE GROUNDS FOOTBALL

BY TOBY JACKSON

Road. Not only were the home team superb in an 8 goal feast, but the whole set-up smacked of a club really on the way up. Their present rise to the top of the Vauxhall-Opel League since then has backed my optimistic belief. A n excellent view from the stand, a superb variety of refreshments and a good Club Shop. What more could one want?

7) RS SOUTHAMPTON: The demise of this club is in my mind tragic and I class myself as being fortunate to have managed to see the ground for a Southern League fixture a few seasons ago. When I walked into the Road-Sea Park stadium, it immediately struck me as a model ground. If I had to start from scratch and design a ground I could not have designed a more pleasing, neat and picturesque format. An excellent clubhouse and a superb playing surface completed the top class impression I formed and I think it very sad that circumstances led to the club's demotion.

8) SOUTH BANK: Fellow Wealdstone supporters will be amazed that I have selected the Northern Leaguers as a favourite ground. Our visit there for a Thursday evening F.A. Trophy replayin March 1986 saw us relieved of the Trophy we had clinched at Wembley the previous May and commence a run of 15 games with only one win up to the end of that season. It was quite a feat reaching this Northern outpost by public transport for a mid-week game but the atmosphere made the effort worthwhile. The crowd of 1147 was 10 times larger than some of the club's League attendances and the cold night added to the giant-killing occasion. One could not help but feel privileged to be part of a most exciting night for the home club and their hospitality before our long journey home eased the disappointment.

9) BATH CITY: Another strange choice for a Wealdstone supporter as the Avon side are a "bogey" side that we rarely seem to beat. Nevertheless Bath remains one of my favourite cities in England and as soon as the fixture is known I hurry to book up a week-end away in the area. The setting of the ground in the hills would no doubt appeal to Steve Pettit after reading his selection of favourite grounds. Once again the absence of the Club Shop on safety grounds coupled with a suspect playing surface are the main faults detracting from the pleasure of visiting Twerton Park.

10) WEALDSTONE: I could hardly leave out my own club after so many years! When I moved to the Harrow area I tried one game at every local ground having become hooked on Non-League football as an 8-year old at Kingstonian and Hampton. Something special appealed to me at Lower Mead that I could not put into words though of course it was a superb team in action then in those Amateur Cup winning days. The terrace humour and the family feel of the away support to see the Stones in action elsewhere kept me hooked at Lower Mead and I am still there 22 years later. Despite the abysmal football currently on offer I expect I'll still be there in another 22 years' time!

Further to our comment on Page 8 of this month's issue, we will not be publishing any more of your articles in the Top 10 Grounds feature that contain descriptions of least favourite grounds, such as that which was published in last month's issue.
Our magazine is trying to promote Non-League football, not destroy the image of individual clubs through negative comments and remarks. We are sure that the people running all Non-League clubs do not intentionally let their grounds deteriorate, and it is only through lack of cash and support that some grounds are lacking in facilities.

CLUB FILE

THE GROUND-HOPPER MAGAZINE

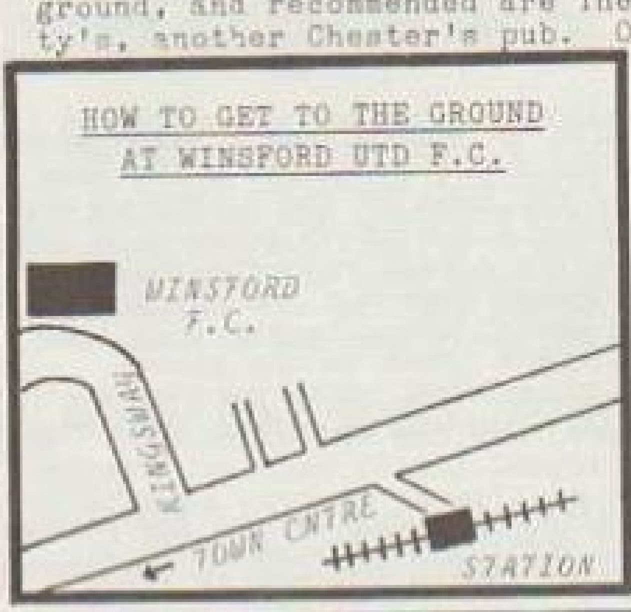
FOCUS ON....

Winsford U.

WINSFORD United, of the Northern Premier Leagu First Division, play at the Barton Stadium in an 8,000 capacity ground that also houses a greyhound track around the outside.

Situated about 11 miles from Nantwich and 16 miles from Chester, it is 165 miles from London in Cheshire. Travel by train from Euston costs £21.00 (Railcard holders pay £13.85), with a change at Crewe. Recommended train times as follows if you wish to have a look around the town before the game:- Euston 09.0 Arr: Crewe 11.03. Dep: Crewe 11.35 (Plat 10). Arr: Winsford 11.45. Coming back, the tim are as follows: Winsford 17.10, Arr: Crewe 17.23. Dep: Crewe 18.07, Arr: Euston 20.10.

From the station, it is a 12-15 minute walk to the ground. Just go into the main road from the station, turn left, and keep walking until you get near to the bottom of the hill. Turn right into Kingsway, and follow the road round and you will see the ground and lights behind the houses. There are buses from the station, K33, K37, X19, X20, X21 go to the groun which is about ¼mile walk. There are a few pubs on the way to the ground, and recommended are The Oddfellows Arms, a Chesters pub, or Fogar ty's, another Chester's pub. On the car park corner of the ground, you will see The Top House, a Whitbread pub. At the bottom of Wharton Road, by the bl bridge is The Red Lion, a Greenall Whitl pub, and opposite is Chasers, a pub serv meals from 12-2 although this is rather noisy drinking establishment. Probably best of the bunch is The Ark, a quiet pu serving bitter at 80p a pint. Try it! The town centre is the usual indoor-type shopping precinct, but for food, try the quite excellent Huntsman Restaurant, the have an extensive menu. For a cheaper meal, Les's Fish Bar serves good fish an chips in the shopping centre.

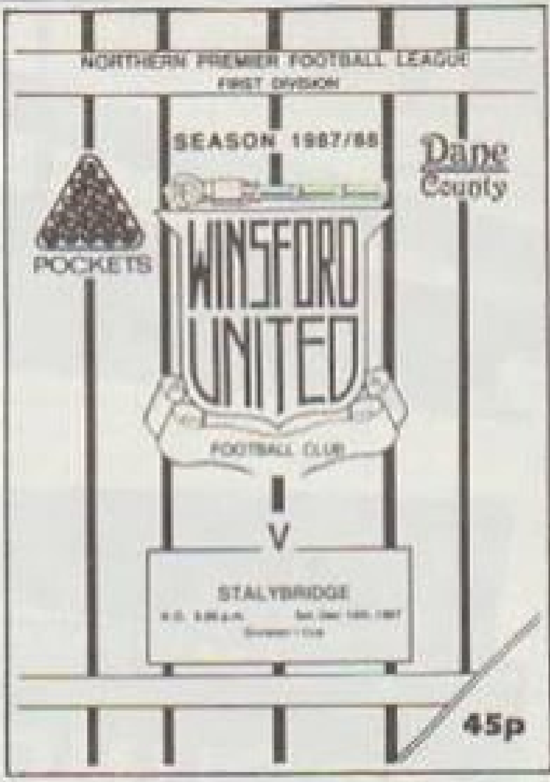


The ground itself has a large car park with a reasonable Social Club outside th ground (see photo) serving a range of beers at reason able prices. Unfortunately i you like to be close to the ac ion, this is no a ground to go because of the greyhound track around the pitc Admission to ga costs £1.20, an programmes cost 45p. You will enter the groun behind the goal and to your lef you will see th glass-front gra stand, which is quite handy for very cold days, and there is a a licenced bar.



The entrance at Barton Stadium.

Just to the side of this grandstand are the club offices and a tea bar, serving excellent meat & potato pies, hot & cold drinks and confectionery. In front of the grandstand, there are three rows of tip-up seats, and at the far side are the dressing rooms and the officials room. Behind the far goal there is flat standing in front of a high concrete wall and along the other side of the ground there is very low covered standing areas, so if you are over 6' tall, beware! There is a teabar at the back of this area too, but they only serve hot drinks. Just to the left of the turnstiles, there are two tiny standing areas with cover, where a lot of fans gather on a wet day.



As mentioned earlier, the programme has a rather unusual cover price of 45p, and for what you get, it is quite pricey. The cover has a blue and white cover, with the club's badge and match details shown (see right), and contains 24 pages in all. It contains all the usual features such as news, league tables, pen-pictures etc, with quite an unusual centre-page statistics spread, with fixtures and results and complete line-ups of all the Winsford United teams throughout the season including goalscorers. The team line-ups for the day's match are on the back page. Over half the pages contain adverts which makes this programme poor value for money.

There are three floodlight pylons on each side of the ground, each one having three bulbs. There are two local newspapers, The Winsford Chronicle which comes out on Thursday's at 22p, and the Winsford Guardian, also out on Thursday's at 25p. The Chronicle seems to give better coverage to United, with good preview news of the forthcoming games, and match reports of the previous week's matches. If you want information about the club, phone 0605 93021, for programme information, phone Editor Andrew Maylor on 0606 594681, and for other information, write to Secretary Peter Warburton, 3 Massey Avenue, Wharton, Winsford, Cheshire.

Incidentally, if you are travelling to the ground by car, from North: Junction 19 (M6) take A533 through Davenham. From South: Junction 18, take A54 for Middlewich. Barton Stadium is ½mile off main road in the Wharton area of Winsford.

There is not a Club Shop at the ground, although a Club metal badge has been produced.

Don't forget : If you want to visit the Social Club, it is outside the ground so go there first before going in.

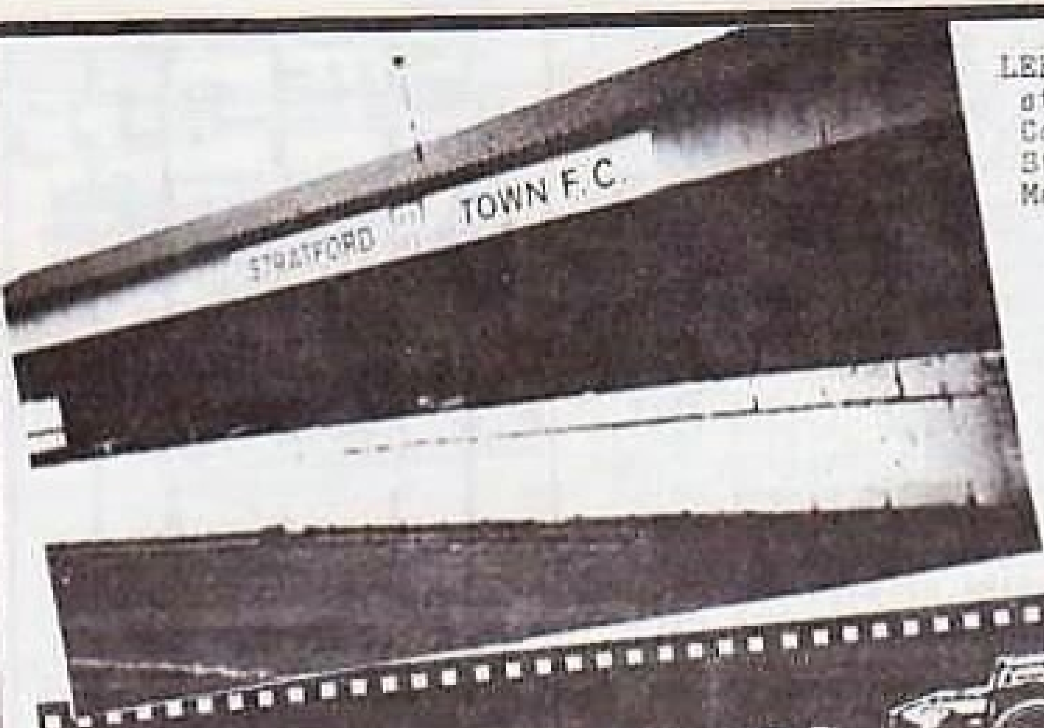
Information and Photos supplied by Steve King.

* * * * * * * *



The Social Club at Winsford United.

GROUNDS IN FOCUS



LEFT : The 200-seater stand at Midland Combination Leaguers Stratford Town's Mason's Road ground.

Photo: Ron Bagshaw



RIGHT : The main stand at Basford United.
Photo : Ron Bagshaw



LEFT: The main 400-seate[r] stand at Hope St, home of Prescot Cables.
Photo: Colin Pee[...]

NON-LEAGUE NONSENSE

We want to hear about the funny, amusing, silly, trivial or downright daft Non-League stories that you have heard, so that we can feature them here. Write to:- Non-League Nonsense, Groundhopper Magazine, 439 Merton Road, Wandsworth, London, SW18

Er...sorry it's wrong team!

DURING the FA Cup 2nd Round 3rd Replay between MAIDSTONE UNITED and KIDDERMINSTER HARRIERS, the 2,052 crowd were in fits of laughter when the gent on the tannoy proclaimed midway through the 2nd half, "And the 1st sub for <u>Kettering</u> is...."

* * * * * * * * * * * * * *

A few years ago, Colin Dredge, the Somerset C.C.C. pace bowler, was playing for Frome Town in an F.A. Trophy tie away at Boston Utd. The Pilgrims won 4-0 and midway through the second half, Frome were awarded a free-kick just outside the area, a forward stepped up and booted it over the old stand. As soon as this happened, a voice boomed from the terracing, "Dredge'll be happy now, they're bringing a new ball on."

* * * * * * * * * * * * * *

Eric Snow of Windsor writes:- One of the funniest football stories I know happened some years ago. I was on duty patrolling a gardens area one Saturday afternoon. A match was on in the Recreation ground and I wandered over to ask a goalkeeper what teams were playing.
He complained that his team kept losing owing to the poor play of the defenders in front of him. Apparently, they were always scoring own goals. He stressed that this was happening every week. No sooner had he said this the opponents set up an attack. He came out to collect the ball and his right-back took a wild swing at the ball and put it through his own goal. The 'keeper turned to me pitifully and said, "You can see what I mean, can't you?"

* * * * * * * * * * * * * *

BELIEVE IT OR NOT! When a lady physiotherapist was appointed at Wallingford Town a couple of seasons ago, her first comments on entering the dressing rooms were, "I've seen it all before - but not eleven at a time!"

* * * * * * * * * * * * * *

BELIEVE IT OR NOT! A ball was once kicked out of Wokingham's ground during a game and landed on the railway truck that runs along the side of the ground, and was carried away by an oncoming train.

* * * * * * * * * * * * * *

BELIEVE IT OR NOT! A rabbit once ran onto the field during a game at Windsor & Eton, which is crown land, and adjoins Windsor Great Park.

* * * * * * * * * * * * * *

BELIEVE IT OR NOT! In the 1982/83 season, Wivenhoe Town printed the address of their ground in their match programme as being in Sussex instead of Essex!

* * * * * * * * * * * * * *

BELIEVE IT OR NOT! In the match between Tongham Youth Club, Surrey and Hawley, Hampshire on 3rd November 1969, the referee booked a linesman and all 22 players, including one who went to hospital!

* * * * * * * * * * * * * *

BELIEVE IT OR NOT! 14,000 copies of the FA Non-League Directory 1988 have been sold, the best sales ever. It was completely sold out before christmas for the first time.

* * * * * * * * * * * * * *

BELIEVE IT OR NOT! In a National Division Welsh League clash a couple of years ago between Bridgend and Maesteg, two substirutes came on at the same time (one for each club) and they were brothers. Tony and Drew Philips came on for Bridgend and Maesteg respectively.

* * * * * * * * * * * * * *

Keep those "Non-League Nonsense" stories coming in. We'll publish those we receive in later issues.

CLUB FILE

THE GROUND-HOPPER MAGAZINE

FOCUS ON....

Alfreton Tn.

ALFRETON Town play in the Northern Premier League Division One after winning the Northern Counties East F.L. last season, and play their home games at North Street, Alfreton (known as the Town Ground). The capacity is approximately 6,000, out of which there are about 120 seats in the main stand on the far side opposite the changing rooms. This corrugated structure is painted in the club colours of red and white, and also incorporates standing room at either side of the seated section, the seats within this enclosure are of the tip-up variety. The small area directly in front of the changing rooms is cordoned off from the public and has been made into an open seating area in order to accommodate club and visiting officials. This seats 40. Behind the bottom goal there is a grass banking that rises about seven feet from the pitch level whilst at the top end there is a covered enclosure where there are about six steps of concrete terracing. This structure stands about twenty feet from the playing area perimeter fencing.

There are two refreshment bars at the Town Ground, well stocked with all the usual items although one of the local delicacies is mushy peas which most of the home supporters purchase without the customary pork pie (and mint sauce) as is common at most northern based clubs. The main tea hut is well situated just inside the main spectator entrance so no-one could possibly miss it. Public bar facilities are available to visiting supporters in the form of a clubhouse which is located just outside the ground. There is a large concert room, two rooms having just been added to include a games room and lounge at the cost of £30,000.

Parking is adequate as the area for the clubhouse doubles up as parking for the ground, and as well as this, there is adequate parking in the streets. The matchday programme has changed twice so far this season, starting off the season with a glossy cover in red and white with a photo on the front and containing 16 pages including 7½ pages of adverts, but now containing a plain red and white cover and only 12 pages (see next page). Normal midweek matches are played on a Wednesday, with a 7.30pm kick-off. Anyone desiring to stay in the district will find plenty of places offering accommodation including The King Alfred, The Plough, and two miles away at Junction 29 of the M1 is the Swallow Hotel.

The telephone number at the club for match news, information or enquiries is Alfreton (0773) 834707). Admission prices to games are £1.20 for Northern Premier League matches, with OAP's and children paying 60p. Like most clubs, attendances in later years have been declining, with the average now being about 200, a long cry from the days when a local derby with Matlock Town would regularly attract between 2,000 and 5,000. The standard of



This is the main stand at The Town Ground.

the floodlighting could be improved, as when trying to follow the play on the far side of the field for evening games, it is sometimes quite difficult, especially with the problem of the players shadows across the field. This is particularly important due to the fact that professional rugby league is also played at the Town Ground, being the home of Mansfield Marksmen.
There are several local papers which anyone visiting Alfreton would be interested in reading. Derbyshire Times gives a complete review of matches and behind-the-scenes activities, Derby Evening Telegraph and the Nottingham Post give full coverage of matches in Saturday sports papers and Monday's edition. Also there are the freebies, The Alfreton Echo and The Free Press.
If travelling from London by train, go from St. Pancras to Alfreton & Mansfield Parkway. Trains leave at 08.42 and 11.15, arriving at 11.07 and 13.55, changing at Nottingham. Coming back, it leaves at 17.59, arriving back in London at 20.33, changing at Beeston. Fare is about £19.00 with discounts for railcard holders. If going by car, take the M1 motorway turn off number 28 and follow the A38 towards Derby for approx. 2 miles and then take the B600 slip road. Turn right and head for the Town centre for 1 mile and North Street is on the left.





* Our thanks to Mr T McBoy, Secretary of Alfreton Town FC, and Phil Bell of Leeds for all the above information and photos, etc.



And here's the area behind one of the goals.

NON-LEAGUE BOOKSHELF

Each month in NON-LEAGUE BOOKSHELF, we review up to three Non-League publications, giving an independent assessment in terms of content, value, quality, etc. If you have a current-season Non-League publication to be reviewed on these pages, please send it to us at the address on page 3 and we will review it here. It can be a handbook, county publication, magazine, souvenir brochure, indeed anything as long as it has a connection with Non-League football. Everything sent in can be returned on request.



The new GROUNDHOPPERS CLUB JOURNAL No.4 is now out and as well as a 24-page issue, there is a 16-page re-print of Issue 1. There is full details of the Rainworth MW convention, an article by George Osborne about his adventures watching football in Gibraltar and Morocco, details about grounds in the mid-Cheshire League, football in Norfolk, an article by Tony Middleton reflecting on that troubled Luton v. Millwall FA Cup tie a few years ago, hopping in Italy, letters, great competition, photos and lots more.
Although Issue 4 was a long time coming, it is a good read and if you would like details of the club and the journal, write to:- *Steve Pettit, 33 Sunley Drive, Hednesford, Staffordshire, WS12 5RF.* SIZE: 148mm x 210mm. NO. OF PAGES: 24 + RE-PRINT ISSUE 1 VALUE: 7 OUT OF 10.



I had to laugh when I received Issue 1 (November '87) of CLUB SOCCER, the new Non-League magazine that seems to have taken for ever to arrive! I actually received it in January 1988. I've heard of late despatching but this is taking things a little too far don't you think? And not even an explanation! And oh dear, it really does make The Guardian look interesting. Printed on large A4 pages, it has a very dull presentation, the photos are of varying quality, and most of the reading is of press releases (ie; player transfers, managerial changes etc) snore....snore.... They promise MORE colour in Issue 2 (December) which will probably arrive at Easter! Well, it would be impossible to have less as this is all in b&w. SIZE: 213mm x 297mm. PRICE: £1 PAGES: 36 VALUE: 3 OUT OF 10.



One of the best Supporters Club magazines to come out for a long time is the offering from Cheltenham Town called MURPHY'S MOB, and at 20p is ridiculously good value. Although only photocopied and the type could be improved, it contains come excellent articles and amusing features, and as can be seen from the front cover this rag doesn't take itself or what is written in it too seriously. It is full of drawings, cut-outs and funny stories and as the cover boasts... "introducing an element of fun into soccer's sad surroundings". If you want a good laugh, a good read and a good few bob change from a pound, get writing today for a copy at 20p + s.a.e. to:- *"Murphy's Mob" 46 Long Mynd Avenue, Up Hatherley, Cheltenham, Glos, GL51 5QN.* SIZE: 146mm x 210mm. PRICE: 20p PAGES: 20 VALUE: 9 OUT OF 10.

Groundhopper Competition

BIG PRIZES

EVERY MONTH!



This month, the winner will receive a VHS video, BBC-approved, called "101 Great Goals" with 65 great minutes of 101 of the best goals shown on TV since 1969, including those from Charlton, Best and Keegan, plus Greaves, Law and more.

HOW TO ENTER

THE GROUND-HOPPER MAGAZINE

FEBRUARY 1988 COMPETITION

Name.........................

Address......................

....

....

Photo caption (in no more than 25 words) as follows:-

....

....

....

Entries MUST be received by Wednesday 17th February 1988.

Please send to:- February '88 Competition, GROUNDHOPPER MAGAZINE, 439 Merton Road, Wandsworth, London, SW18 5LB.

This month, all you have to do is to take a good look at the unusual photo above, taken at a Non-League game. Then, in no more than 25 words, think of an amusing caption to go with the picture, as to what the player with the ball is saying as the dog chases after him.

You can either complete the form and send it in with your caption, or you can send in the whole page, and write the caption in the bubble provided with the photo. Or, you can send in your entry on plain paper if you do not wish to cut up your magazine. Entries MUST be received by Wednesday 17th February, and the Editor will choose the most amusing entry as the winner. Results announced in our March 1988 issue. We may also feature some of the other captions sent in as well if they are funny enough.

In last month's competition, we did not receive any entries again, so obviously there are no prizes won!

GROUNDHOPPER PROFILE No. 6



David Collins

David Collins is 32 years of age and lives in Cardiff. He has followed Non-League football for over 20 years, having started watching his (then) local club Wimbledon when they joined the Southern League.

David says, "I followed Wimbledon home and away in the late sixties and early seventies and always enjoyed visiting new grounds, but I stopped travelling regularly to away games after violent incidents at Grantham and King's Lynn in 1973."

After moving to Cardiff in 1980, David's visits to Plough Lane became less frequent, but it is only in the last couple of years that he has returned to non-league football. Although he watched quite a few non-league games last season, David tells us that his enthusiasm for the non-league scene was really re-kindled by watching Merthyr win the Welsh Cup and by the timely appearance of GROUNDHOPPER MAGAZINE.

"At the start of the season," David goes on, "I decided to combine occasional trips to Wimbledon with monthly visits to Merthyr and visits to as many Welsh League grounds as I can manage. I average about one game a week, because my groundhopping adventures have to fit in with my working and family life." (David works as a Senior Principal with a Government Department called ECGD, managing it's Computer Division, and is married with 2 children, Clare (7) and Robert (4).

In the larger non-league grounds, David looks most of all for atmosphere and 'identity' and rates Merthyr's Penydarren Park as his favourite ground. "But of the Welsh League grounds I have visited, I particularly like the Rhondda grounds at Ton Pentre and Ferndale where the welcome is always friendly and the surroundings are full of character. I hope that by contributing to GROUNDHOPPER MAGAZINE I can help attract a few more spectators to Welsh League soccer, which I believe is under-exposed, particularly in publications like the Non-League Directory."

We want to hear from more of our readers with a view to being featured here in the "Profile" page. Write a piece about yourself on similar lines to the one featured above and send it to us, together with a colour or black and white photo of yourself, and we will feature you in a future issue of GROUNDHOPPER MAGAZINE.

PAPER TALK

A MONTHLY LOOK AT LOCAL PAPERS UP AND DOWN THE COUNTRY WITH NON-LEAGUE FOOTBALL COVERAGE!!!

This is the last in the current season of "Paper Talk" features. It will be back with a new series in September 1988 when we shall be reviewing more local papers that cover the Non-League scene. This month, Bill Berry, editor of Non-League Traveller reviews some papers for "Paper Talk".

HARROW OBSERVER-Thursdays-25pence.

The football content is disappointing considering the size of the newpaper(112 pages).There are reviews of the matches featuring Wealdstone,Harrow Borough,Wembley,Kingsbury Town,Rayners Lane, Edgware Town and Harrow St Mary's,but little else.Published by Middlesex County Press Ltd,34 Greenhill Way,Harrow,Middlesex, HA1 1YT.

BANBURY GUARDIAN-Thursdays-18pence.

Good coverage of Banbury Utd,Easington Sports and Brackley Town. Also covers,in brief,the Banbury & District and other local leagues. Published by Heart of England Newspapers Ltd,45 The Green,Banbury, Oxon,OX16 9XH.

SURREY ADVERTISER-Fridays-20pence.

Leatherhead,Woking and Dorking are widely featured.Farnham Town, Cranleigh,Ash Utd,Bagshot and Camberley Town are also included. Excellent for fixtures and results from Dan-Air League and Surrey County Premier League.Published by Surrey Advertiser Ltd,Martyr Road,Guildford,Surrey,GU1 4LQ.

ILFORD RECORDER-Thursdays-15pence.

Plenty of sport is covered in its 92 pages,but very little of it features the local non-League teams.West Ham Utd get saturation coverage,but Leytonstone Ilford,Woodford Town and Barkingside are restricted to a few lines.Published by South Essex Recorders Ltd, High Road,Ilford,Essex.

WILTSHIRE GAZETTE & HERALD-Thursdays-22pence.

Quite good coverage of Chippenham Town, Calne Town,Highworth Town and Purton.Also gives a round-up of Wiltshire County League and North Berks League,with league tables.Published by Wiltshire Newspapers,14 Market Place,Devizes,Wilts.

HAILSHAM & DISTRICT EXPRESS-Fridays-18pence.

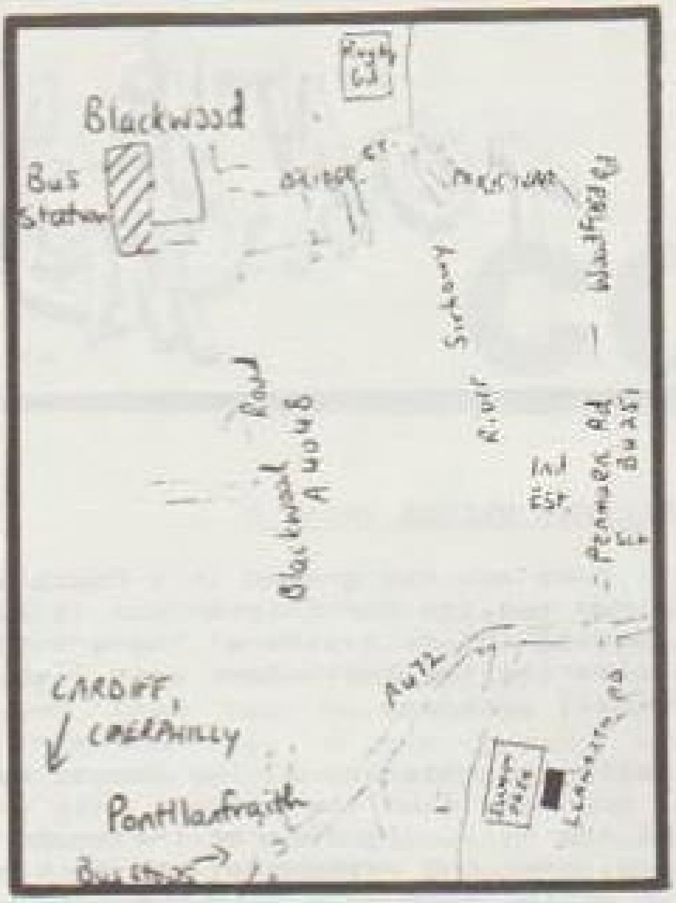
Lewes receive the biggest coverage,but also has a Sussex County League round-up featuring Newhaven,Ringmer,Seaford,Peacehaven, Hailsham and Cooksbridge.Has good results service for County League, Southern Counties Combination,East Sussex League,etc.,but poor on fixtures.Published by Sussex Newspapers Ltd,High Street,Lewes.



Pontllanfraith, of the Abacus Welsh League, National Division, play at Islwyn Park, Pontllanfraith, near Blackwood, which is several miles north-east of Caerphilly.
To reach Pontllanfraith, catch a bus from Cardiff. Bus No.26 (Cardiff-Tredegar) stops in Pontllanfraith but the faster X26 stops only at Blackwood, some 20 minutes walk away. Fare is £1.65 return, journey time 1¼ hours. Trains leave London's Paddington for the 145 mile journey to Cardiff at10.00 and 11.00, arriving at 11.46 and 12.53 respectively. Coming back, trains leave Cardiff at 18.26 and 19.31, arriving back at Paddington at 20.26 and 21.34. Fare is £23.00 return with discounts for railcard holders.
The ground at Islwyn Park is shared between the football, rugby and cricket clubs who all use the council owned facilities. The ground has flat grassed standing room all round the pitch, with one large but rather old stand, seating approximately 500 spectators. When entering the ground, there is a car park directly in front, and a road that leads you to the cricket pavilion. This side of the ground from the car park is where you will see the stand, built from concrete, which has wooden planks but without any back rests.
Under the stand, you will find a refreshment area serving the usual hot and cold drinks, etc. and next door are the dressing rooms.
At present, there is not a Clubhouse at Pontllanfraith, although there may be one built in the near future.
There is a fixed rail all around the pitch, and behind the goal you will see rugby posts! The cricket square is immediately behind this. There is a stream at the other end of the ground, and opposite the stand, you will see a small grass standing area for spectators with a river running behind.


The stand at Pontllanfraith FC.

Before 1964, the town's football team were called Switch Gear FC. However, when the company of that name left the area, the present club was formed. Pontllanfraith then joined the Welsh League in 1972.
The ground generally is, as you would expect from a club of this size, quite small and basic, but to many of our groundhoppers, this is all part of the appeal of the hobby. Pontllanfraith do issue programmes for all home games (see next page) which is 30p. It has rather a home-made feel to it with teams, club statistics and a league map all completed in manuscript.





But at least they are making the effort to issue, which is more than can be said for some clubs. There are no floodlights at Islwyn Park.

At the time of writing, the club are having an average season, and are at present about sixth from bottom of the table.

Attendances are currently at around the 30 to 40 mark although they can manage up to 60 for some games.

The club play in Royal Blue and for further information on the club, write to the Secretary, Mr. D.P. Chiplin, 26 Glannant Street, Cwmfelinfach, Ynysddu, Newport, Gwent.

With no floodlights, there are very few games in midweek, so most games during the winter on a Saturday kick off early at 2.00pm.

* Above information and photos, etc supplied by David Collins of Cardiff, with additional information supplied by Steve King.



Action from a match at Islwyn Park.

THE *TONY MIT...*

CAN I HAVE MY BALL BACK PLEASE

It is not often that the ball goes out the ground in a Football League game, though when West Ham had the old Chicken Run it was quite common. Since the demise of this side of the ground, apart from Geoff Hurst once clearing the North Bank with a shot I cannot recall any other lost ball incident.

Outside the League it is all too regular. The ground was Leyton. The centre forward pounded down the pitch. Only the keeper to beat. He swung at the ball. It cleared the keeper, went over the bar, kept on going, over the netting at the back of Leyton's ground, and went crashing through a bathroom window. Half a minute later a somewhat irate person appeared at the shattered window, but surprisingly did not stay to watch the game, nor did he offer the ball back.

A visit to Highfield, now long gone, was always interesting. If the ball went out behind the far goal, there was a fast running river right behind, and the club official was armed with a fishing landing net. He had approximately thirty seconds to retrieve the ball, before it disappeared round the bend and towards the Thames. This happened six times when I was there, and he got it back every time, but only just.

Do you know which team have kicked the ball out of the ground the most times in a televised game. Yes, you are quite correct, it is Crook Town, who managed to clear the main stand at Romford six times during the televised Amateur Cup game in the early 50's. (Romford complained bitterly that they did not want TV coverage of this match, and afterwards were scathing in their criticism of the crowd, which was only 7,500. Two season's earlier 17,000 had attended for a similar match.)

My favourite lost ball incident was not in fact a lost ball at all, as it came back. I was at Welling Utd., and their ground adjoins a main road. The shot cleared the bar with ease, and was sailing majestically onwards when it was headed back by a London double decker bus, which I am certain jumped two feet into the air to connect.

Lastly one match I went to had more lost balls than shots. I was recently at Clacton, where, in addition to having no programme and no covered accommodation, the two teams had no idea where the goal was either. Only four shots in the whole match, but the ball cleared the ground no fewer than nine times.

Any advance on nine ?

DLE-TON COLUMN

A RAINY DAY IN JANUARY

The majority of non-league followers like to visit a ground new to them, and if there is a new programme at the end of it as well, so much the better. On the January day in question, my own team had no match so I had the choice of where to go. My intention was a new ground and a new programme. No real difficulty, plenty of choice. Or so I thought.

The rain was coming down in buckets. With the strong possibility of a postponement I decided to make a shortish jounrey. First choice was Writtle. There was to be a pitch inspection but they were hopeful. I phoned back at 12, and yes it was on. Excellent ground directions were given, and then the question, 'Is there a programme.' 'Yes' was the reply, 'but not today, we did not have time to get one done.'

So Writtle could wait for a week or two. Next I tried Park Street (Herts. County), and the person who answered had no idea if a match was on. Wormley (same league), and after several attempts I gave up -- no answer. 12.30 and time was against me. Clacton next. No answer. Eton Manor. No answer. I was beginning to wonder what was the point of having a phone. The rain had now reduced to a steady downpour, but time was rapidly approaching 13.00.

In desperation I phoned Haverhill. Yes the team had just left to go to Clacton and the match might be on. As a precaution I checked that Brightlingsea's game was on, and off I went, down a very waterlogged A12, to arrive at a windswept and rainswept Clacton just after 1400. Was the game on. Yes, sort of. The referee was inspecting the pitch now, and would make a decision shortly. By 1430 no decision, and it was too late to go anywhere else by now (Brightlingsea started at 1400), so I wait and hope.

At 1435 some club officials endavour to stop the perimeter fence from blowing down in the gale, and at 1445 the match is on. What do I find --- no programme. I should have gone to Writtle all along.

A. L. Middleton
47 Honiton Road
Romford
Essex
RM7 9AJ

BACK ISSUES of THE GROUNDHOPPER MAGAZINE

Such has been the success of our magazine since it's launch in September, that we now only hold a limited number of each of our previous issues. They are still available at £1 (incl. p&p) each by sending a cheque or postal order (payable to Groundhopper Magazine) and completing the form below and sending to: Back Issues Offer, Groundhopper Magazine, 439 Merton Road, Wandsworth, London SW18 5LB. All orders dealt strictly on a first come, first served basis.

ISSUE No.1 SEPTEMBER 1987

• 44 Pages • Feature: Groundhopping in the 1980s • Scandinavian adventures • Souvenir pull-out on Weston-Super-Mare FC • Isle of Man Soccer Festival 1987 • Photos • Cup Draws • News and views and lots more

ISSUE No.2 OCTOBER 1987

• 44 pages • Scandinavian adventures continued • Souvenir pull-out on Macclesfield Town • Feature on Lowestoft FC • Non-League Directory • Hugh Sliss Column • Plus all the regular news, features and photos.

ISSUE No.3 NOVEMBER 1987

• 48 pages • Souvenir pull-out on Gretna FC • Features on Yeading FC, Armitage FC Pwllheli & District FC • Hopping over to Belgium & Holland • Groundhopping in Scandinavia • Reader Survey • Hopper Diary • Lots more

ISSUE No.4 DECEMBER 1987

• 48 pages • Souvenir pull-out on Warminster Town FC • Club File features Bromsgrove Rovers, Great Yarmouth Town, Hinckley Town, Blyth Spartans and Teignmouth • A guide to groundhopping in Belgium and Holland • Grounds in Focus • Christmas Competition • Lots more

ISSUE No.5 JANUARY 1988

• 52 pages • Souvenir 8-page pull-out on Harrogate Town • Club File features on Weymouth, Odd Down, Tooting & Mitcham Utd. • Isle of Wight Football - Part I • Groundhopping in Denmark • Focus on Barry Town and Ton Pentre



ORDER FORM

Please send the following back issues of GROUNDHOPPER MAGAZINE.

ISSUE No.	QUANTITY REQUIRED
1	Sold Out
2	Sold Out
3	
4	
5	



I enclose a cheque/postal order to cover cost (incl p&p) at £1 each

Total enclosed £

NAME

ADDRESS

Postcode

Send to: Back Issues Offer, Groundhopper Magazine, 439 Merton Road, Wandsworth, London SW18 5LB

SPECIAL SOUVENIR FOUR - PAGE PULL-OUT FEATURING......

BURY TOWN

Facts about the Club

BURY TOWN have been in existence since 1872, although they were re-formed in 1986 as Bury Town FC Ltd. They have a proud history, and perhaps their greatest moment of all came in the 1968-69 when reaching the 1st Round of the F.A.Cup, and managed a 0-0 draw at their old Kings Road before being knocked out in the replay. This game attracted a record attendance of 3,000 at the old ground. They are founder members of the Suffolk County FA (1885) and of the Eastern Counties League (1935).
After several seasons in the Southern League, Bury Town reverted to their Eastern Counties League status until they gained entry this season in the Southern League Division One South. The record attendance at Ram Meadow is 2,500, and this was for the 4th Qualifying Round F.A.Cup tie with Enfield last season where Town lost 0-1 after a spirited 1-1 draw away. They were Eastern Counties League Champions in 1963-64, and runners-up in 1937-38. They have also won numerous county cup competitions including Suffolk Senior Cup honours on no less than five occasions.
They have also been members of the Metropolitan League, and won it in 1968-69, and finishing runners-up in 1967-68. They are nicknamed 'The Blues' and club colours are sky & navy blue stripes, black shorts.

And ground

Ram Meadow is a small ground, with a capacity of only 3,000, but it is quite unusual in that there is cover on all four sides. It is in a rural setting with water on three sides and a car park on the fourth. The main stand can hold about 150 spectators, and there is also a small covered stand on the other side of the ground. Behind both goals, there is terracing which is covered, so on a wet day, you should be able to remain dry while watching the game. On entering the ground from the car-park entrance, you will see the club offices and Clubhouse in front of you.



The Clubroom is quite spacious and you can purchase back copies of their current-season home programmes here, as they are all displayed on a rack near the bar.
There is a well-stocked tea-bar on the other side of the main stand, serving a wide selection of hot & cold drinks, snacks and confectionery.
There are adequate toilet facilities, and the club have floodlights, where midweek matches are played usually on a Wednesday (7.30pm). There is a large coach & car park outside the ground. Admission to games costs £1.00.



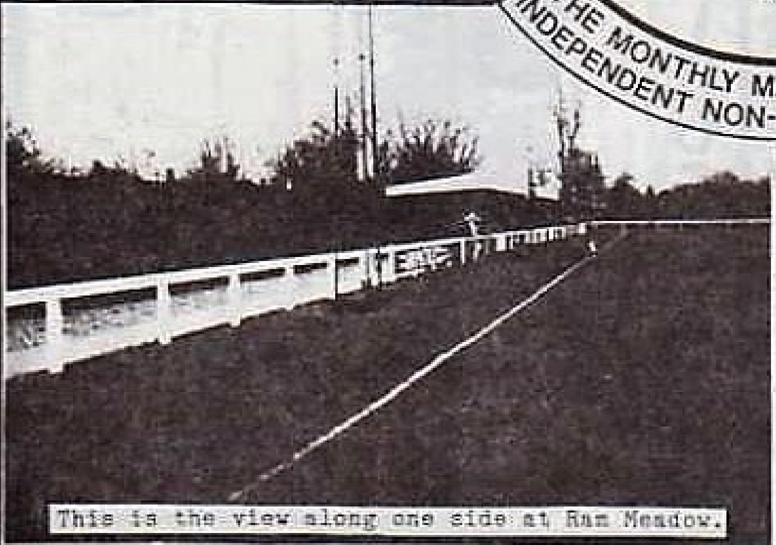
The area behind one of the goals at Ram Meadow.



And here's the other end at Bury Town's ground.

THE GROUND-HOPPER MAGAZINE

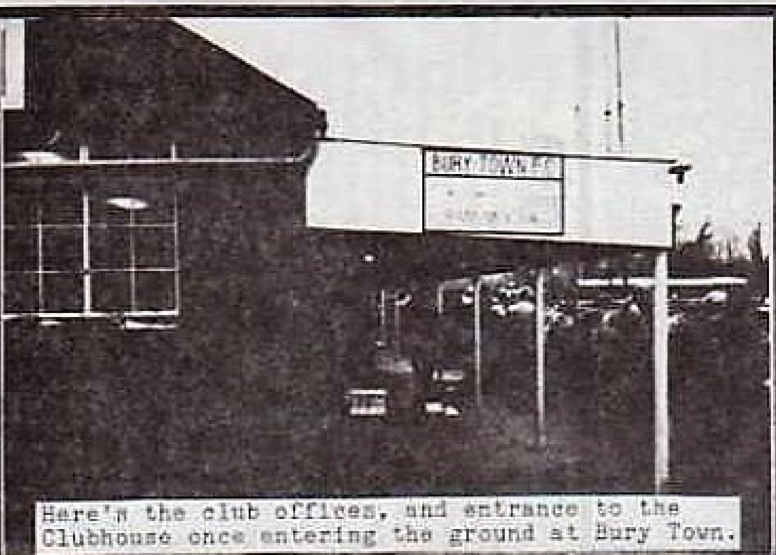
THE MONTHLY MAGAZINE FOR THE INDEPENDENT NON-LEAGUE TRAVELLER!



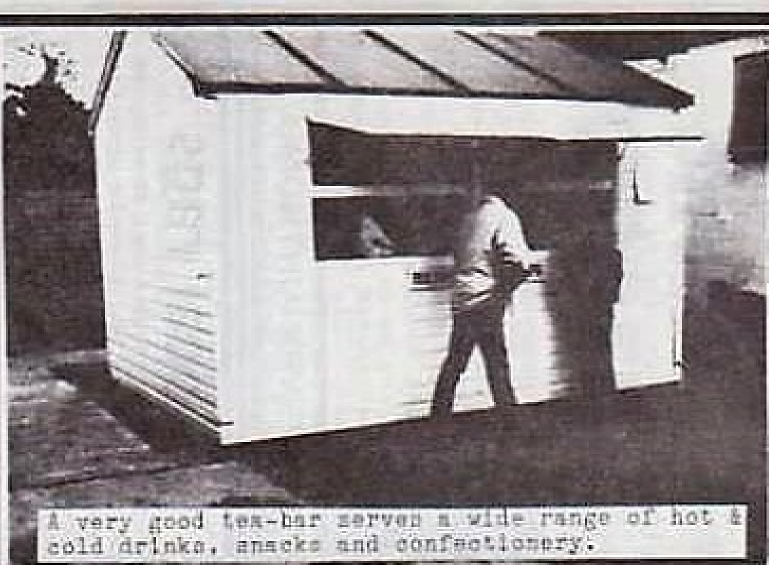
This is the view along one side at Ram Meadow.



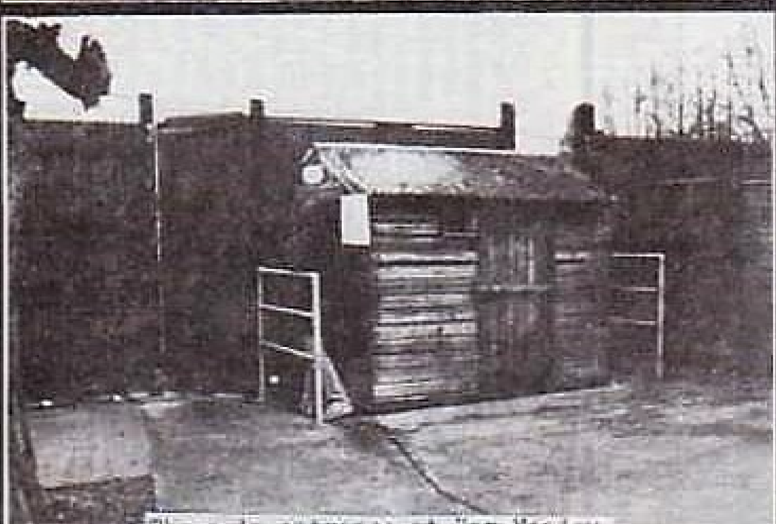
The unusally-shaped stand is along the other side of the ground at Ram Meadow.



Here's the club offices, and entrance to the Clubhouse once entering the ground at Bury Town.



A very good tea-bar serves a wide range of hot & cold drinks, snacks and confectionery.





Action from a recent FA Vase tie at Bury Town

Food & Drink

The Suffolk town of Bury St. Edmunds is very much a market town, and it has a very good, but busy shopping centre, about 5 minutes walk from the ground. Because ot it's size, there are far too many excellent pubs and restaurants to list here. It's just a case of finding one of many that suits you. The clubhouse inside the ground is recommended as it has a good range of local and national beers, and the tea-bar is also worth a visit.
If you get to Bury early on a Saturday before a game, we recommend that you try one or two of the pubs in town, as they all have character typical of this part of the country. There are also b&b places as well as hotels in the area if staying here.

Travel

Travel to the Suffolk town of Bury St. Edmunds is easy by train, and it is 85 miles from London. Trains leave Liverpool Street at09.35 and 11.35, arriving at Bury at 11.36 and 13.36, changing at Cambridge. On the return journey, trains leave at 16.57 and 17.54, arriving back at 19.05 and 19.55 changing at Cambridge or Ipswich respectively. The fare is around £14.00 with discounts for railcard holders.
If travelling by car, leave the A45 by 2nd exit signed to centre Bury St. Edmunds. Take 1st exit at the roundabout into Northgate St. At 2nd traffic lights (T junction) turn left into Mustow Street and left again into Cotton Lane.

Ratings

* Poor ** Below Average
*** Average **** Good
***** Very Good
****** Excellent

PROGRAMME **** CLUB SHOP n/a
HOSPITALITY *** OVERALL IMPRESSION ****
CLUBHOUSE ****
TEA BARS *****
SEATING & COVERED ACCOMMODATION *****
PARKING FACILITIES *****

Local rags

There are several local newspapers from the Bury St. Edmunds area that cover the local football team.
These include THE BURY ST. EDMUNDS MERCURY, out on Fridays, and THE EAST ANGLIAN DAILY TIMES which will give coverage of Bury Town plus a few other local area sides including match reports, previews and photos. THE BURY FREE PRESS is quite pricey at 28p, out on Fridays, but there are up to 84 pages, and the sports coverage is good including news and reports of Bury, Thetford and others.



The Proggie

The Bury Town programme costs 25p and contains 20 pages, all printed throughout on glossy paper. The front cover is in blue & white, and there is a different b&w photo on the cover of each issue, along with the match details such as opposition, date, etc.
Although there are nearly 12 pages of ads, it is still quite an interesting programme due to the quality of the paper and the attractive cover. There's a page of Club notes, player profile, chart of results all the clubs in the league, centre page feature on the opposition, plus a very interesting "The Way I see it" feature by a local reporter on Non-League bits and pieces, a page of statistics including the shirt numbers worn player-by-player as used quite often by league clubs in their programmes, tables etc, and the team line-ups are on the back page. All in all, a good effort for a club of this size.

SHOP HOPPER



SHOP RATINGS GUIDE
4 = Dismal
5 = Poor
6 = Average
7 = Good
8 = Very Good
9 = Excellent
10 = Out of this world

*** A MONTHLY REVIEW OF NON-LEAGUE CLUB SHOPS ***

CAERNARFON TOWN : The shop is situated by the Secretary's Office a few yards inside the entrance to the ground. Once inside the shop, it is bright and spacious. There are no club-based souvenirs on sale (at the time of writing) and the programme selection is very poor. What there are of them are piled into two boxes in no particular order that also includes the current season stock (what little there is of it). It is a shame because the youngsters that run the shop try very hard with extremely limited resources. RATING : 4 out of 10.

BROMLEY : This shop, one of the better ones in the Vauxhall-Opel League Premier, is like Caernarfon's, situated right by the turnstiles as you enter the ground. They have an excellent range of club-based souvenirs including jumpers, badges, sweatshirts, ties, scarves, key rings, also a small selection of other clubs badges. The programme selection is good. There is a fair selection of current season stock, albeit mainly Southern area League and Non-League clubs. They also have a wider selection of older items and specials at reasonable prices. You can also purchase a small range of football mags including "Groundhopper" and "Non-League Bureau." RATING : 7 out of 10.

WITTON ALBION : This club has probably the best shop in the N.P.L. There are two of them. The programme shop has an excellent selection of programmes, both current and past, and the souvenir shop has a wide range of regalia, badges (own and other clubs), scarves, pennants, pens, tee-shirts, sweat-shirts, jumpers, and even club track-suits. The souvenir shop is on the top of the banking to the right of the main stand, whilst the programme shop is at the right-hand end of the covered terracing on the far side. The staff here could not be more helpful, a credit to the league. RATING : 9 out of 10.

BARROW : The shop, situated by the covered terracing at the squash court end of the ground, has an excellent line in club souvenirs such as badges (plastic insert variety), scarves, pennants, jumpers, ties, key fobs, pens, etc, but as for programmes, the selection is small. The current season selection apart from Barrow's home & away's is minimal and the general stuff (what there is of it) is strewn across a table in no particular order whatsoever and when people have finished browsing, the programmes are in a worse state than what they were in before. Apart from that, the service is generally very knowledgeable and helpful. RATING : 5 out of 10.

There will be more Club Shop reviews next month. If you visit a Club Shop at a Non-League ground and would like to review it for us, send it to our address on page 7 and we'll feature it. Don't forget to give your own personal rating out of 10 though.

A MONTH IN EU

with COLIN PEEL

The recent articles by Chris Ashbridge have illustrated the tremendous groundhopping opportunities open to people between the ages of 18 and 26 if they were to purchase an Inter-Rail ticket which gives you a month's rail travel over much of Europe. Apart from the beaten track of Scandinavia, Benelux and Northern Germany, the potential is there for some real pioneering hopping for the travel-mad football enthusiast. The extremes are Portugal, Morocco, Yugoslavia, Greece, European Turkey, and a couple of Warsaw Pact countries. The mind boggles at the tremendous scope provided by the Inter-Rail ticket - just take a look at the map of Europe. Think of the great names of European soccer - St Etienne, Benfica, Real Madrid, Juventus, Red Star Belgrade, Panathinaikos, Rapid Vienna, Bayern Munich - a myriad of spectacular stadia a train ride away.

My priase of Inter-Rail and its benefits for the young groundhopper stem from personal experience in August and September 1987. Being on vacation from University, I was able to spend six weeks working to finance the trip, and I even got some financial assistance from the University itself. I went with my girlfriend, so the trip was a combination of groundhopping and a more conventional holiday. This meant that I wasn't breaking my neck to get round as many grounds as possible. As for financial outlay, the trip cost around £450. £200 was spent on the ticket (£139), insurance and getting from Birmingham to France. The other £250 was spent on accommodation, food, and general spending. This sounds awfully cheap for a month, but we camped throughout, sometimes sleeping overnight on the train, and we eat basically but well. Compare this with Tony Middleton's £355 for a week (or two) in Holland by car.

Since this was my first sortie into Europe for groundhopping, I decided not to try anything too spectacular, and not to push myself. Over the course of the month, we travelled just over 4,500 miles (I reckon this is about 2,000 miles below the average distance covered by an Inter-Railer) in only four countries, visiting ten grounds on the way.
If this sounds modest to the point of being blase, it is because I know of people who have travelled far more extensively in Europe. At Wigan in May, I overheard a Swindon fan behind me saying to his mate, "There's a game at Lille on Saturday, are you coming?" I also know of a group of hoppers in the West Midlands with a special interest in East Germany and Czechoslovakia, so an average trip for them takes in clubs like Bohemians Prague and F.C. Karl Marx Stadt.



Paris S-G supporters set off flares and fireworks five minutes before kick-off.

ROPE
Part 1



One of this group also goes to West Germany every year for the 'Bundesliga-Aufsteigsrunden', the play-offs between amateur sides to get into Division Two. He returns laden with programmes from obscure clubs like RSV Wurges and SpVgg Erkenschwick. These men have my utmost admiration.
Anyway, leaving Birmingham on August 27th at 8am, we arrived in Paris (predictably) twelve hours later. The camp-site at Maisons-Laffitte is next door to a floodlit soccer pitch with a sizeable clubhouse and a superb rugby pitch next to that. First stop on Sat 29th Aug was the Parc des Princes Stadium, mentioned by Raymond Jarvie in Issue No.4 (It's not spelt Parc-de-France though!). By chance, the visitors were Bordeaux, which is Paris-St-Germain's match of the season. For this reason, the cheapest seat was £7, although I gather the usual cost of a seat is about £3. The cost is offset by the fact that programmes (24 glossy colour A4 pages) are free. This is a reliable venue for hoppers, since when PSG play away, Matra-Racing-Paris are at home. The stadium is superb for football watching, with a quadric shape and a continuous cantilever roof over the two-tier seating. The gate for the match, a tense affair which PSG won 1-0, was only 30,000, possibly because Madonna was performing in Paris the same evening, and the game was also on TV. Try to avoid the PSG hooligan element, which congregates in the upper tier of the Tribune Boulogne. They are reputed to be the worst in French football, and they proved this before the kick-off with an impressive fireworks display. The flying seats and cigarette ends in the second-half weren't quite so impressive.
The following day, we transferred to Nantes and a superb campsite on the North of the town. On the Monday, we took a day trip to Laval via Le Mans to have a look at the Stade Francis-le-Basser, which is less than a mile from the station. It is set in the sporting area of town, and is a more typical small European ground. What makes it distinctive is the Main Stand, unique in Europe. Futuristic is perhaps the best description - oddly shaped exterior, faced in white and looking very solid.

CONTINUED PAGE 51



Laval - Main Stand. A rear view of their highly unusual stand, the only distinctive feature of the Stade F.-le-Basser.

ISLE OF WIGH

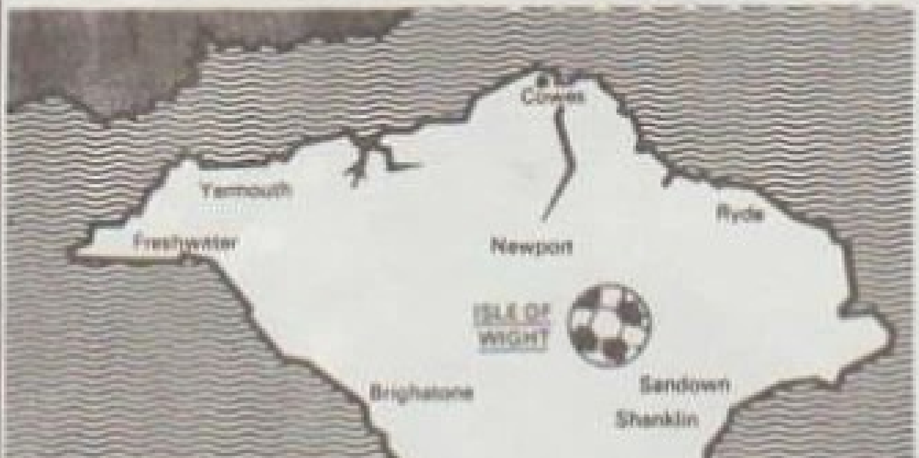
—*PART TWO*—

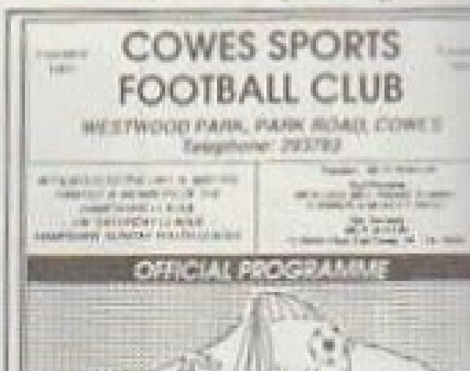
We continue our feature on Isle of Wight football with the final part, and this month there are some ground photos of both Cowes Sports and Newport (IOW), maps, details of Cowes Sports' ground, and the conclusion to our Isle of Wight Directory, the first part produced last month.....

COWES SPORTS FC play in the Hampshire League Division Two, and their ground is called Westwood Park. Cowes also has another team, East Cowes Vics, and this famous yachting town is situated in the north of the island (see map below). In May last year, The Yachtsmen as Cowes Sports are known, celebrated their 75th anniversary, and a special match was played between Cowes Sports and East Cowes Vics to celebrate this great achievement. A special souvenir programme was issued containing 32 pages and is full of excellent photographs of recent years as well as those of earlier years including some from the turn of the century. Also included in this souvenir programme was a complete history of the club and a complete statistical league record since it's formation. If you would like a copy which is excellent value for money, there are still some available from P. Jeffery, 12 Barton Close, Whippingham, Isle of Wight, PO32 6LS at £1 + an 20p stamped addressed envelope (9" x 6" minimum size). At present, there is not a Clubhouse at Westwood Park, but it is one of the club's top priorities, and the club are trying to get an F.A. loan to incorporate one under the main stand which also has to be upgraded under the new fire regulations. It is the only stand big enough on the Island to come under these new regulations.

Both the main stand and the smaller one on the opposite side of the pitch are wooden and in a pretty poor condition due to their age.

Admission to Hampshire League Division 2 games at Westwood Park is just 40p for adults, 25p for children, pensioners and cars. Cowes Sports FC also has two other Saturday sides playing in the Isle of Wight league. On Sundays, their under-18 team plays in the Hampshire Youth League, the only Island team in that league. It is their 4th season in that competition and despite the high travelling costs involved in participating, the Youth policy has been justified because seven of the current first-team have come up through from the Youth Team.





T FOOTBALL

THE YACHTSMEN



Action from a recent match at Cowes Sports FC.
Photo supplied by Cowes Sports FC.

Schoolboy Toby Collard does a very good job producing the matchday programme and these are issued on a regular basis. The cover has a distinctive blue cover and the Cowes Sports badge. Travelling on the Isle of Wight is quite good, but obviously during the warmer months it can get quite busy with holiday crowds. Buses, although on the dear side, do get you from A to B fairly quickly, and because of the very limited train service only covering a small fraction of the Island, you are better off using buses or hiring a car if there for any length of time. Buses out of Ryde go to most parts of the Island, including Brading, where Town play their games. It is quite a basic ground, and a visit to the famous Waxworks Museum beforehand can pass the time, and it is quite good. The Island, especially in the main holiday resorts such as Sandown, Shanklin and Ventnor, have planty of places to stay, and there are pubs, restaurants and nightlife in all these places. If going by ferry from Portsmouth to Ryde, the journey time over will take about ½ hour or so, and is usually included in the →





The area behind one of the goals at Newport FC.
Photo supplied by Brian Chaplin.

price of your train ticket when you apply on the main-land. For the 79½ mile trip from London, for instance, a cheap day return from Waterloo to Ryde would cost around £15.00, with a 50% discount for railcard holders. For Saturday games on the Island, there are trains from Waterloo at 9.25 (arrive Portsmouth at 11.09), 09.55 (11.25), 10.25 (12.09) or 10.55 (12.25) with connecting ferry services to Ryde for passengers at 11.45, 12.45 and 13.45. Ferries leave Ryde afterwards at various times, but is is best to check out all the times of the trains and connecting ferries with the booking agent when purchasing the tickets as times may vary according to time of year, etc. You can also go to Southampton and get a ferry or Hydrofoil service to Cowes if you wish to see games on this part of the Island.

A trip to the Isle of Wight is particularly pleasant in early or late season for football, and also for strolling through the quaint villages and coastal resorts when the weather is good. And with teams involved in the Isle of Wight League, Wessex or Hampshire League, there is a variety of standards and styles to choose from when watching football here.

Whether you plan a visit to the busy capital of Newport in the centre of the Island or to the windy town of Cowes in the north or to Yarmouth right over on the west coast,, you'll enjoy your trip to the Isle of Wight. And if we've managed to whot your appetite for popping over to watch some Non-League football, all the better. Later on in the year, we hope to update this feature and bring you details and some photos of some of the smaller clubs playing on the Island, with everything you need to know when setting off for the Isle of Wight.

And if any of our readers would like to send in such information for inclusion, please drop us a line and we'll feature it.



The main stand at Westwood Park.
Photo supplied by Cowes Sports FC.

ISLE OF WIGHT CLUB DIRECTORY : If you would like to visit any of the clubs on the Island, here is just two of our useful guide to some of the sides, with names and addresses of secretaries, so that you can write to them in advance for information, such as confirmation of match, programme availability, kick-off times, opposition, etc.

GATEWAY : A Higgins, Cowep Flat, John Street, Ryde, IOW, PO33 2PY.
HAYLING BILLY : R Mayy, 17 Eastwood Close, Hayling Island, Hants.
HORSESHOE F.C. : W G Stilwell, 11 Clarence Road, Newport, IOW, PO30 1ER.
ISLE OF WIGHT POLICE : D D Murray, 4 Greenfields Road, Newport, IOW.
ISLE OF WIGHT POMPEY SUPPORTER : R P Cook, 5 Weeks Road, Ryde, IOW, PO33 2TJ.
ISLE OF WIGHT SOCIETY OF ASSOCIATION REFEREES : R L Turley, 18 Sylvan Drive, Newport, IOW, PO30 2JR.
MEDINA : K Dudley, 14 Rew Close, Ventnor, IOW, PO38 1AW.
NAIGO : M J Paull, 9 Greenham Drive, Seaview, IOW, PO34 5LA.
NEWCHURCH : Mrs V Donovan, 63 Forest Road, Winford, IOW, PO36 0JZ.
NEWPORT : C R Cheverton, 19 Oakwood Road, Ryde, IOW, PO33 3JT.
NEWPORT BUZZARDS : T Lane, Flat 2, Lymington Court, Union Street, Newport, IOW, PO30 1QB.
NITON : M Small, 46 Gills Cliff Road, Ventnor, IOW, PO38 1AD.
NOMADS XI : A B Cooke, 29 Fishbourne Lane, Ryde, IOW, PO33 4EZ.
NORTHWOOD ST. JOHNS : D J Glaysher, 47 Pelham Road, Cowes, IOW, PO31 7DR.
NORTHWOOD UNITED (IOW) : M E Moody, 20 Lower Church Road, Northwood, Gurnard, Cowes, IOW, PO31 8JG.
OAKFIELD : M Cass, 20 Cross Street, Oakfield, Ryde, IOW, PO33 1EH.
OSBORNE ELECTRONICS : D R McLaum, 1 Cokenutts Road, Haylands, Ryde, IOW, PO33 3RS.
OSBORNE COBURG : Mrs S Ealand, 5 Lodgeside, East Cowes, IOW, PO32 6LX.
PAINTERS F.C. : Mrs J Knight, 31 Victoria Road, Cowes, IOW, PO31 7JH.
PAN (SATURDAY) : T Hayward, 28 Downs View Road, Pan Estate, Newport, IOW.
PAN (SUNDAY) : R G Haywood, 112 Place Road, Cowes, IOW, PO31 7AE.
PLESSEY (COWES) : M H Fay, 100 Wyatts Lane, Northwood, IOW, PO31 8PY.
PLESSEY SUNDAY : M H Fay, 100 Wyatts Lane, Northwood, Cowes, IOW, PO31 8PY.
RC MONARCHS : M McNamara, 78 Whitepit Lane, Newport, IOW, PO30 1NT.
ROOKLEY : A K Russell, Springfield, Rookley Green, Ventnor, IOW, PO38 3NY.
RYDE COUNTY OLD BOYS : T Wheeler, 12 Beechcroft Drive, Weston, Ryde, IOW, PO33 4NB.
RYDE SPORTS : E T Hurst, 12 St. Johns Wood Road, Ryde, IOW, PO33 1HP.
RYDE UNITED : W Humphries, Garden Flat, Lind Street, Ryde, IOW.
SANDOWN : R Hutches, 20 The Midway, Lake, Sandown, IOW, PO36 9HG.
SHANKLIN : R D Murray, Kimberley Hotel, 29 Wilton Park Road, Shanklin, IOW, PO37 7BU.
WEST WIGHT : V A King, 4 Southview Cottages, Chale Green, Ventnor, IOW, PO38 2JW.

* Our thanks go to Cowes Sports FC Secretary Pete Jeffery for information supplied in our IOW feature, and for maps and photos supplied.



The ground at Newport Football Club.
Photo by Brian Chaplin.

BADGERS SET
WITH TOBY JACKSON

With 1988 now well under way it seems an appropriate time to take a quick trip around the country and see what is new in the way of enamel lapel badges. I shall confine myself to enamel lapel badges as the cheap plastic insert-type badges found at several clubs are only a poor substitute for the real thing and not worthy of promotion!

As it is not practical for me to write to every club in the country each month to discover whether any new badges have been issued I am dependant upon you, Groundhopper readers, to let me know about any badges you come across on your travels. It has been encouraging to receive so many letters following on from my monthly reviews of badges League by League and I hope that the trend will continue so that I can keep our readers up to date with news in the Badge world.

So, let us get moving and take a look around at what is new. We shall start in the GM Vauxhall Conference where the main news is the long-awaited arrival of Fisher Athletic's new badge which I personally feel is quite a work of art and should prove a popular seller at Salter Road. The badge in black and white enamel features the club crest and motto "nulli secundas". Macclesfield Town promptly put me straight after my Conference badge review pointing out that they now had a badge on offer to supporters. The badge in blue and white enamel has obviously sold well as I have been unable to replenish my own stocks. At London Road I have a new badge in the course of production for Maidstone United which will be in black and amber with the club crest prominent. The badge should be out at the end of March or start of April. My new production for Northwich Victoria was recently dispatched to the Drill Field and was very well received. It sees a complete change from the green "V" badge previously stocked, the new issue highlighting a rampant eagle on a white enamel background. At the Park View Ground Welling United have a new badge on offer, larger than their last enamel issue and at the time of writing eagerly awaited through yours truly's letter-box!

In the Vauxhall-Opel, Hayes have a new badge at their Club Shop which I have not as yet seen but which will be dropping onto my door-mat shortly. At the end of 1987 I produced similar shaped badges for both Hendon and Woking, being small shield badges with scrolls beneath. Collier Row also opted for a badge of this type for their latest issue which came out in December. Just recently commissioned is a new badge for Basildon United who decided they wished their club name to appear rather than just initials as on their last badge. The new badge should be ready at the end of April. In red and blue enamel comes the new issue from Horsham FC where Ian Hands has got to grips with organising a Club Shop. At Clarence Park St. Albans City have brought out a large blue enamel badge with their familiar yellow cross emblem. Hitchin Town have overcome the problem of the missing dye for their distinctive canary badge and a new batch have been produced with different feather markings and larger initials "HTFC".

Nothing new in the Beazer Homes League although I am in the course of producing a new badge for Gosport Borough as outlined in last month's

Groundhopper. The badge should be out around the same time as Maidstone's above. Varying rumours surround the production of Sutton Coldfield Town's new badge, which has been advertised for several months in the Football Programme Advertiser but which has apparently not yet been completed. Any news, Paul Vanes?

One new badge in the Building Scene Eastern League can be found at Braintree Town who now have a very smart badge in yellow and blue enamel featuring a factory, a floodlight pylon and the nickname "The Iron".

In the Great Mills League problems arose with Liskeard Athletic's new badge which unfortunately omitted the "Athletic" part of the club name. Production was therefore put back to square one and a further period must be allowed before the new badge is ready. My new badge for Mangotsfield United came out at Christmas in maroon and sky blue enamel, commissioned by Ron Loftus at the Club who used to be a supporter of Romford FC prior to their demise. Hot off the press also is the new badge for Devizes Town in red and white enamel on a gilt base in a small shield design.

The only new issue in the Bank's Brewery West Midlands League is that to be found at the Lamb Ground where Tamworth have a souvenir well worthy of their excellent F.A. Cup run.

In the Northern Premier, Gateshead have a new badge in red and blue enamel combining features seen in their last two badges. Rhyl have brought out a gilt badge in blue and white enamel recently: the "Lilywhite" badge should sell well at Belle Vue. A new badge is in course, rumour has it, at Seel Park for Mossley FC also. Lastly, there was a new issue for Eastwood Town towards the end of 1987 that will go down well with animal lovers! In white enamel it looks to me like a badger's head featured: perhaps it should be adopted for this column too.

In the Northern Counties East League there are badges newly available from Harrogate Railway Athletic and Mexborough Town with a further production hopefully to follow from Ossett Albion in due course so I am told. In the Welsh League Cwmbran Town are to be commended for their recent issue which I trust will go down well in the valleys!

So much for our look at new badges around the country. These are all featured on my latest badge lists among some 140 Non-League club badges. Lists can be obtained by SAE to me at 25 Tulip Court, Nursery Road, Pinner. Middlesex. HA5 2AP as can details of my badge production services. Next month I intend to look in detail at the badges of the Northern Premier League; until then enjoy your football and keep a look out for those collection items around the country!

photos in....

THE GROUND-HOPPER MAGAZINE

Whilst we very much encourage and welcome photographs of Non-League grounds and action for inclusion in the magazine, we strongly recommend that if you require your photos back, that you only send us a maximum of about 6 at a time. This is because the process used to get them suitable for publishing called "screening", is extremely expensive, and therefore, we can only prepare those that we are to use for the following issue. Therefore, there may be considerable delay in returning large numbers of photos if they are used later on.

CLUB FILE

THE GROUND-HOPPER MAGAZINE

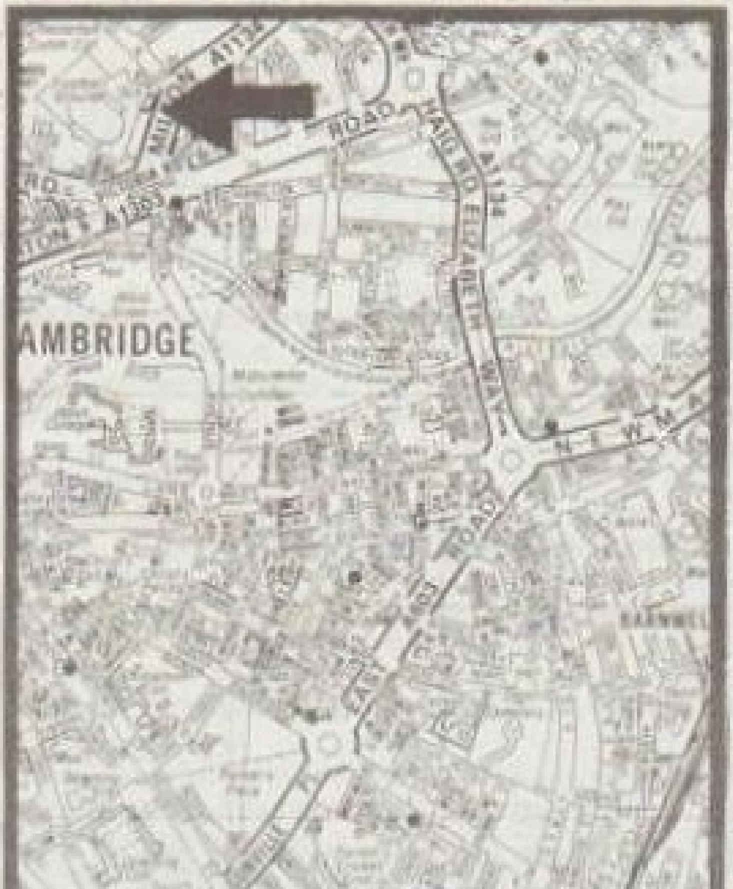
FOCUS ON....

Cambridge C.

Several Non-League clubs have moved to 'new' grounds in recent seasons, but Cambridge City are unusual in having developed a new home on part of the site of their old stadium at Milton Road.

The ground is about two miles from the station, but there are buses from the station into the City centre, which is worth a visit if you have time to spare. There are numerous pubs, restaurants and cafes in the city, and a few pubs close to the ground, but those who like to arrive early at the ground may like to note that there is no Clubhouse as such at Milton Road, but a Restaurant and Private members club which seems to be run separately from the football club and is not open before the match.

Once inside the ground, admission to the stand is free, which is just as well as there is no cover for spectators. The stand is built above the club offices, dressing rooms, etc. so offers quite a good view of the action. There is hard standing on the other three sides, but no banking or terracing, and spectators behind the goals are very close to the action, unlike the old ground, with it's greyhound track. The capacity is stated as 3,400, including 400 seats, but with no terracing at all, it is difficult to imagine how more than 2,000 at the most could get a view of the match. The programme is in black and white throughout, and has eight pages inserted in the static 12 page cover, including adverts. A couple of pages of notes are supplemented by the usual pen-pictures and statistics. No price is shown on the cover, but a copy will cost you 30p on the day.



Cambridge City have no Club Shop, and there are no signs of one opening in the near future. There is a tea-bar inside the ground, with burgers and hot dogs available.

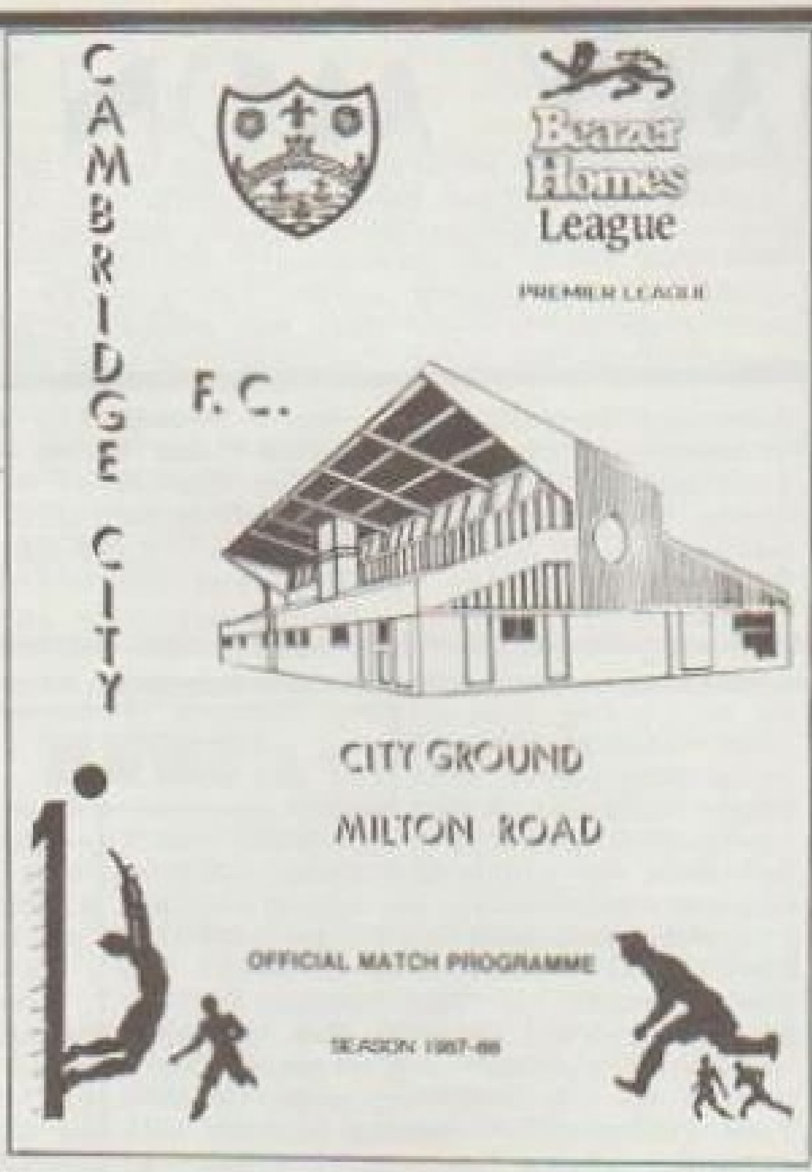
The ground entrance is just off Milton Road, and you should follow the sign advertising the City Restaurant, and just around the corner is the Car Park, which tends to get very muddy in wet weather.

If you wish to receive more information from the club, news of games and enquiries, you should phone the club on Cambridge 357973.

The Beazer Homes League Premier Division club used to attract big crowds in the 1950's and 1960's. In fact, at one time, they were a much bigger club than near neighbours Cambridge United, who, of course, went on to become members of the Football League, and indeed had a brief spell as high as Division Two. At one time, it was very rare for City to attract crowds of less than 3,000.

Nowadays, they are lucky if they get 300 or 400 to their home games, and this is an indication of how far City have slumped in recent years. In 1950, over 12,000 packed into the

to see an FA Amateur Cup 3rd Round tie against Leytonstone! The club gained promotion to the Premier Division two seasons ago after winning the Southern Division (South), and their other notable honour is to win the Southern League championship in 1962-63.
The local newspapers include the Cambridge Evening News which gives coverage of both Cambridge City and United including match previews, photos and reports.
Cambridge is 56 miles from London, and trains leave Liverpool Street at 10.35, 11.35 and 12.35 and 13.35, arriving an hour later, with the return trains leaving Cambridge at 17.05 or 18.05, also a one-hour journey, though you will need a taxi to be certain of making the earlier train. There is a taxi office outside the ground. Once you have arrived at Cambridge station, go along Station Road, turn right into Hills Road, and then along Regent Street, St.Andrew's Street and Sidney Street. Go on into Bridge Street and over the River Cam, right into Chesterton Lane, then on into Chesterton Road. Follow the one-way signs and left onto the A10. There are plenty of pubs etc to choose from, as mentioned above, but highly recommended in Thompson Lane is the Spade & Bucket, a Tolly Cobbold pub, also serving lunchtime and evening meals.



Wednesday is Cambridge's usual midweek day for home matches, and suitable trains leave Liverpool Street at 16.35, 17.32 and 17.35, arriving at 17.35, 18.37 and 18.45 with the return at 21.55, arriving back at Liverpool Street at 23.23. Services are also available to Peterborough and Norwich.
To summarise, although the ground at Milton Road is fairly basic and lacking in the usual clubhouse and shop to be found at most clubs at this level, a visit here is particularly interesting for anyone who watched a match at the 'old' ground, and along the far side from the entrance. It will surely bring back some memories, and at the same time will drill home to you just how much it has all changed since those 'great' days of years gone by.
Incidentally, getting back to the point about local newspapers, apart from the Cambridge Evening News, which doesn't have a sports edition any more sadly, The Cambridge Weekly News (12p) has no sports coverage at all, while the Cambridgeshire Times and March Advertiser only covers March and Chatteris Town.
If you would like to phone the Secretary instead of the club for news of matches and information, etc, please contact Peter Woolston on Cambridge 314632.
The decline of Cambridge City is indeed a sad story, and with United also struggling as well, this university city with hundreds of things to see and do is without a successful football team, but maybe one day great days will be back again, and whether they are at the Abbey Stadium or Milton Road remains to be seen.

* Above information supplied by Ron Jones.

MY MONTH

We begin this new series with an article by TREVOR PIKE of Dawlish in Devon who writes about his groundhopping adventures during the month of December 1987. And remember...You don't have to write about a recent month. We'd still like to hear from you if you have had eventful groundhopping months from the past, so keep 'em coming.

Each month, we invite ou readers to write in with diary of their groundhoppi adventures and experience during a typical month. If yo would like to contribute w to the usual magazine addre enclosing photos of th grounds whenever possible

Although December 1987 was a relatively low key month in terms of car mileage - saving up for Christmas being a necessary priority - it neverthe- less provided an interesting clutch of new grounds and one cliff-hanger story that only fellow groundhoppers will truly appreciate.

5-12-87 : CULLOMPTON RANGERS v. CLYST VALLEY (Devon & Exeter League Premie Division). Easily visible from the M5, Cullompton's Speeds Meadow ground is reasonably basic - fenced but with no cover or seating. Raised concret standing elsewhere. The small but comfortable Social Club's bar was open after the match with teas and snacks also available there at half-time. An adjoining full-size pitch has training lights and there is a large car park outside the ground. Bonus for me was the 12-page programme printed on glossy paper with red and blue (club colours) being prominent on the front cover. I naturally grabbed a few of these! Score: 3-1 Att: 40.

12-12-87 : BASHLEY v. DORKING (FA Vase 3rd Round). Joined up with Rob Davidson to visit his local club and had a thoroughly enjoyable day. It's always interesting to visit village clubs with the vision and ability to progress and Bashley FC is certainly an excellent example. The best of luck to all concerned. Score: 1-0 Att: 300. (By the way, I can confir that a visit to "The Speckled Trout", New Milton is definitely worthwhile.)

Having treated my wife Pam to her Christmas Theatre present the night before ("Follies" - a message for someone here?), we drove down to East- bourne on the Saturday morning to visit the shops (groan!) and Eastbourne Town (hurray!). Having parked outside the ground, I wandered back with th shopping while Pam sought a hair appointment. Inside the Saffrons, I note the Eastbourne players arriving and was asked if I'd come for the match. Silly question, I thought. "Of course" I said. "It's off!" I was told. "A thousand curses!" I responded. It appeared that Horsham YMCA had been struct down with a 'flu virus and could not raise a side. "You can watch us train if you like" offered an Eastbourne player helpfully.

Pausing only to leave an explanatory note in the car, I grabbed a taxi and made for Langney Sports anticipating that despite this slight hiccough all would be well in the end. Reassured by the number of cars parked at Langney I dashed into the Social Club. "Is the match on?" I enquired. "No, the ground's waterlogged. Are you the ref?". Deciding not to con- tinue this conversation, I returned to the taxi having wisely put it on hold. "Plan C" I announced. I think the most irritating aspect of the journey to Seaford was the taxi driver's enthusiastic observance of the Highway Code and willingness to point out and describe various local land- marks. However, he did get me there after a brief stop to revise my note to Pam - and all <u>was</u> well in the end! Excellent hospitality at Seaford Town who defeated East Grinstead 2-1 before a crowd of 40 in Division 2 of the Sussex County League. First-rate programme and organisation. Good to see this club making progress again. It appears that despite storm damage, which meant the loss of the stand, the Council will be providing an improved structure in 1988.

26-12-87 : STICKER v. ST. DENNIS (East Cornwall Premier League). A morning kick-off here. A few clubs in this league print programmes, but Sticker is not one of them. The club is based at Ennis Farm, St. Step en Road. The ground is owned by the farmer and dressing-room facilities are located within the farm buildings. Players and officials then walk across a field to reach the ground. The slightly sloping pitch is fence On one side there is a small section of rather delapidated covered standi

accommodation with benched seating at the rear. Adjoining this is a new tea-bar which also serves the usual confectionery. The hospitality was very good - particularly in the 'Hewas Inn' afterwards. Score: 2-2 Att:40.
26-12-87 (pm) : WADEBRIDGE TOWN RES v. ST. BLAZEY RESERVES (East Cornwall Premier League). Couldn't find an afternoon match at a new ground so revisited Wadebridge Town after an absence of 14 years. Score: 1-3 Att:60
28-12-87 : LIVERTON UNITED v. KINGSTEIGHTON ATHLETIC (Mod-Dec Windows South Devon League, Premier Division). What a surprise! Newcomers to the Premier Division, Liverton are based in the tiny hamlet of Halford, just outside Newton Abbot. The roped pitch is slightly sloping and a fast running stream carries off the match ball unless it is speedily retrieved with the aid of strategically placed anglers' nets! The splendid brick clubhouse is not licenced, but an excellent mug of tea was most welcome at half-time. Various sporting activities take place throughout the year at Halford and this is rapidly developing into a notable community facility. A training pitch with lights catches the eye and, wait for it, an eight-page programme in the club's sky-blue colours is being regularly issued!

GROUNDHOPPER NEWS **

The kick-off at the FA Vase 4th Rnd tie between BASHLEY and VALE REC had to be put back 1½ hours from 2pm to 3.30pm, because Vale had been delayed on Guernsey due to fog. Some of their supporters and committeemen got out on the last flight to Southampton Airport before the fog descended. The rest of the party (the players and the rest of the supporters) had to catch a scheduled flight to Heathrow, and the coach which should have met them at Southampton had to go to Heathrow to pick them up. The plane landed at 11am, and they finally arrived at Bashley around 2.30pm. After all this aggravation, it was hardly surprising that the Channel Islands club eventually lost the game 1-5.

- - - - - - - - -

Brian Hunt, who is preparing the D.N.L's centenary book, was recently interviewed on Radio Cleveland on December 9th. The interview was so well received, it was repeated on Boxing Day!

- - - - - - - - -

Seaham Secretary Dave Copeland had a day to remember on November 28th. After playing in goal for a local side in an over-35's match, he was having a lunchtime pint when manager Harry Wilson asked him to play in goal that afternoon against Norton, in a D.N.L. Division 2 match. Dave did so, and after conceding an early goal, played a blinder and his side won 2-1!

- - - - - - - - -

On Saturday 19th December, Paget Rangers used their new turnstiles for the first time when Aston Villa were the visitors in the Birmingham Senior Cup. Villa, bolstered by four first-teamers, won 5-0 in front of a crowd of 555. The turnstiles, a glass, timber and breeze block construction, greatly improves the ground. Sadly, Springfield Road could become a Banks' Brewery League ground at the end of the season unless Paget's form improves.

- - - - - - - - -

Clacton Town have plans to erect a covered stand at their new Rush Green Bowl ground soon, plus some terracing. There is to be a new match programme ready for next season and eventually they hope to open a Club Shop.

- - - - - - - - -

Clapton, who along with Exmouth Town invite groundhoppers to sign a visitors book at their grounds, have just opened a new club shop. It was officially opened at the club's friendly on 13th January v. Royal Navy, and a programme was issued for this game.

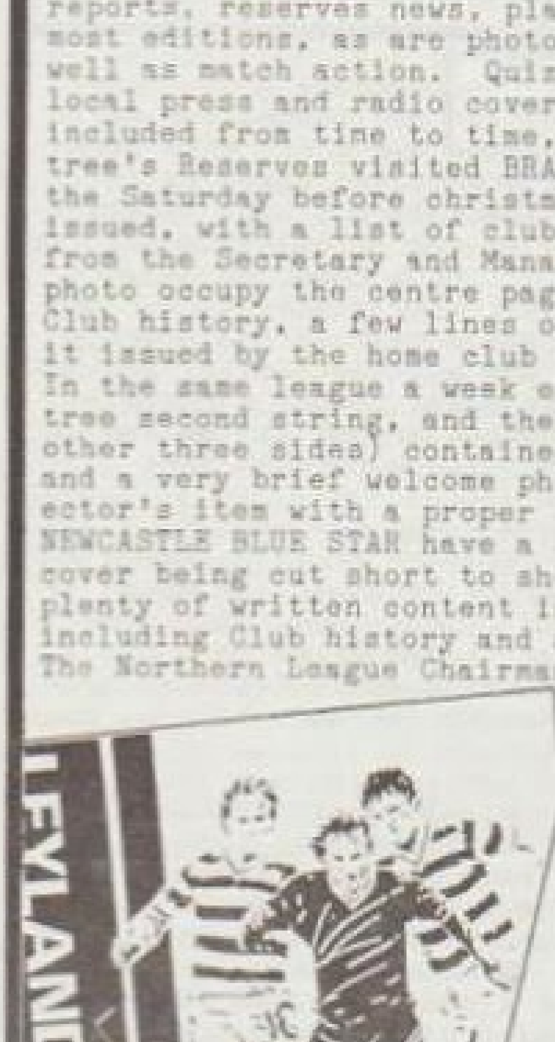
- - - - - - - - -

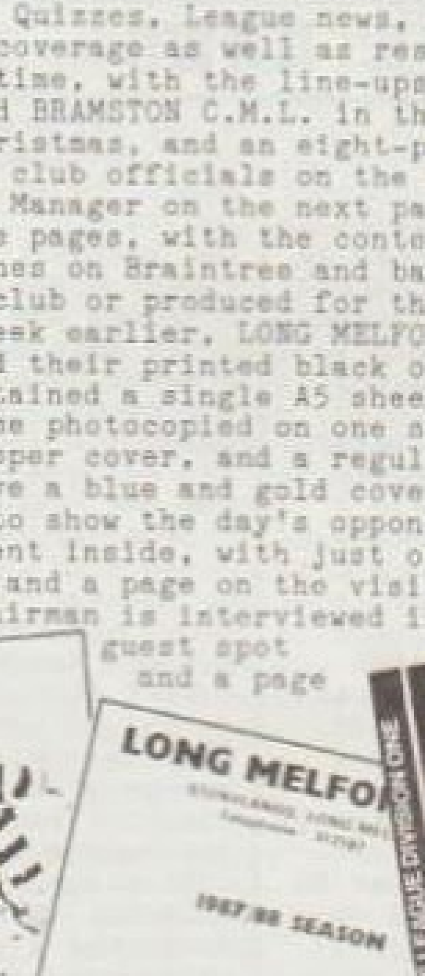
Attendances in the GM Vauxhall Conference, boosted by some remarkable gates over the Christmas period, are up by 36% on last season. Six clubs - Lincoln City, Barnet, Weymouth, Boston United, Cheltenham Town and Stafford Rangers - are showing an improvement of at least 30% and only two - Dagenham and Enfield - have shown a decrease. And a staggering 5,822 saw the Xmas Boston Utd v. Lincoln clash.

NON-LEAGUE PROGRAMME REVIEW WITH RON JONES



BRAINTREE TOWN are again producing a very good programme this season, with up to 28 pages (about 16 of ads) for 25p. The cover is blue and yellow, with match details and a different b&w photo for each issue, while the content varies from issue to issue, apart from the Editorial, manager's page, visitors covers and league tables which appear every time. Detailed match reports, reserves news, player profiles and club shop news are included in most editions, as are photos, with some old and humourous ones included as well as match action. Quizzes, League news, and one-off features such as local press and radio coverage as well as results and statistics are also included from time to time, with the line-ups on the back page. Braintree's Reserves visited BRAMSTON C.M.L. in the Essex & Suffolk Border League the Saturday before christmas, and an eight-paged photocopied programme was issued, with a list of club officials on the inside cover and a few lines from the Secretary and Manager on the next page. Appearances and a team photo occupy the centre pages, with the content completed by League tables, Club history, a few lines on Braintree and back-page line-ups. But, was it issued by the home club or produced for them as a one-off?
In the same league a week earlier, LONG MELFORD also entertained the Braintree second string, and their printed black on white cover (ads on the other three sides) contained a single A5 sheet with just the date, teams, and a very brief welcome photocopied on one side. Very basic, but a collector's item with a proper cover, and a regular issue. Moving north, NEWCASTLE BLUE STAR have a blue and gold cover to their 28-page issue, the cover being cut short to show the day's opponents on page three. There's plenty of written content inside, with just over three pages on the visitors including Club history and a page on the visitor's manager.
The Northern League Chairman is interviewed in the guest spot and a page







of league news follows, while the written content is completed by editorial, Club history and quiz. Statistics, player profile, and a photo complete an issue with plenty of reading, and only 4 pages of ads. Price 25p. In the South Devon League, NEWTON TOWN issue a regular 20-pager, with 8 pages for each game inside the standard cover and ads. This includes a page of notes, results and fixtures, with match details and line-up on the centre pages, while fund-raising activities such as Jumble Sales and even a meat draw are also mentioned. No price is shown on the cover of a club in an area of the country that sees many clubs from lesser known leagues issue regular programmes. LEYLAND MOTORS of the North West Counties League issue a 16-pager with a glossy blue & white cover. Priced at only 10p, it contains news, forthcoming fixtures and statistics, line-ups in the centre pages, plus the League's own newsletter reprinted, and match reports of two previous games involving the club. The inside back page gives a complete list of the club's fixtures. All in all, quite good value for only 10p, although it could be improved and a higher price charged. From the same league, BURSCOUGH issue a distinctive 28-page issue with a green and black photocopied cover containing a team photo etc. The line-ups here are on page 3, and there are a massive 19 pages of adverts. But there is a whole page on the opposition, match reports, club news, tables, results from their league for that week, a page of forthcoming games involving Burscough, and the season's results so far. At 20p, it is not bad value, and although there are far too many adverts, it does make a good addition to one's own personal collection.

<u>NEWS</u>! BANGOR CITY are showing their 'new' title "Bangor City FC '87" on their programme cover from 21.11.87....BEDFONT of the Dan-Air League and Sussex County Leaguers LEFTOVER SPORTS are <u>not</u> issuing at present.

COMING NEXT MONTH : New-style 'Programme Review' giving even more news, reviews and information. Yes, this column will have a completely new look. Don't miss it!





THE GROUNDHOPPER MAGAZINE PROGRAMME SERVICE



Keep those programme orders coming in. We have some more great new programmes that have just arrived, and these are listed below. And keep watching for more great bargains throughout the season. Before you order your programmes, please read the notes below carefully. Send your order to:-
RON JONES, GROUNDHOPPER PROGRAMMES, 24 POPLAR ROAD, WIMBLEDON, LONDON, SW19 3JR.

1). Please add POSTAGE to your order at the following rates:- 1 programme 18/13p, 2-3 progs 26/20p, 4-5 progs 32/24p, 6-7 progs 40/30p, 8-9 progs 48/37p, 10-11 progs 56/43p, 12-13 progs 64/49p, 14-15 progs 72/55p, 16-17 progs 82/62p, 18-19 progs 92/70p, 20-21 progs £1/85p. Our maximum charge for postage is £1. We will pay any excess above this amount. Please state on your order whether you want your programmes sent 1st or 2nd class.
2). If possible, please pay by cheque, leaving the amount blank, though endorsed not to exceed £...., this amount being your total order + postage. This will help us avoid credits etc should any item be out of stock. We will, of course, advise you of the amount completed on your cheque. We also accept postal orders + stamps. A credit note will be sent to cover any refunds, etc, if you do not send an endorsed cheque. Please make all cheques/p.o's payable to "GROUNDHOPPER MAGAZINE".
3). Please send a self-addressed label if possible.
4). Programmes will be despatched within 48 hours of receiving your order.
5). ALL programmes ordered from us carry a MONEY BACK GUARANTEE.

ABERYSTWYTH TN v. Brecon, Blaenrhondda, Cardiff Corries (Welsh Int. Cup) 20p. ALTRINCHAM v. Kidderminster 40p. ANDOVER v. Tonbridge 25p. ATHERTON L.R. v. St. Helens 20p. AYLESBURY UTD v. Alvechurch, Buckingham (WIC), Kettering (FAT), Northampton (FR), Sudbury (FAC), Wycombe (FAC) 35p. BANGOR CITY v. Buxton, Marine (FAC), Oswestry, Sth. Liverpool, Southport, 40p. BANGOR CITY '87 v. Barrow, Horwich, Penrith (LC) Worksop 40p. BARKING v. Kingstonian, Woking (ACDC) 30p. BARNET v. Northwich, Stafford 40p. BASILDON v. Lewes, Wembley 25p. BASINGSTOKE TN v. Carshalton 25p. BELPER TOWN v. Denaby Utd 25p. BERKHAMSTED TN v. Barkingside (FAV), Hemel Hempstead (FAC) 20p. BILLERICAY TN v. Marlow 25p. BISHOPS STORTFORD v. Kingstonian, Leytonstone 30p. BROMLEY v. Egham (ACDC), Slough 30p. BUCKINGHAM TN v. Forest Green, Grantham 20p. BURY TOWN v. Atherstone (FAV), Chatham, Corinthian, Erith, Letchworth (FAC), Norwich Res (FR), Sheppey 25p. CANTERBURY CITY v. Hastings, Poole, Ruislip, Sheppey (WIC) 20p. CAERNARFON TN v. Marine (PRES. CUP), Morecambe (LC), Southport (GMAC) 25p. CAMBRIDGE CITY v. Dorchester 30p. CARSHALTON ATH v. Dulwich, Hitchin, Leatherhead (ACDC) 30p. CHELMSFORD CITY v. Ashford 40p. CHELTENHAM TN v. Wealdstone, Wycombe 50p. CHICHESTER CITY v. Midhurst 25p. CLAPTON v. Vauxhall Motors 25p. CROYDON v. Hitchin 30p. DAGENHAM v. Boston Utd 40p. DARTFORD v. Bedworth, Gosport, Nuneaton 30p. DUNSTABLE v. Chatham 25p. ENFIELD v. Dagenham, Fisher, Kidderminster, Stafford 50p. ERITH & BELVEDERE v. Burnham (WIC), Ruislip 30p. EXMOUTH TOWN v. Saltash 25p. FELTHAM v. Molesey 30p. FINCHLEY v. Hornchurch, Witham (ACDC) 20p. FISHER ATH v. Boston Utd, Runcorn 40p. FOLKESTONE v. Corinthian 25p. GATESHEAD v. Corby (FAT) 30p. GLOUCESTER CITY v. Halesowen 30p. GOSPORT BOROUGH v. Shepshed, Yeovil (FAT) 35p. GREAT SHELFORD v. Witham (FAV) 25p. HALESOWEN TN v. Oldwinsford (B'HAM SC) 25p. HAMPTON v. Basildon 30p. HARROGATE TN v. Alfreton 30p. HAYES v. Farnborough, QPR (FR) 35p. HEMEL HEMPSTEAD v. Ely (FAC) 35p. HENDON v. Carshalton, Hertford (FAC) 30p. HINCKLEY ATH v. Halesowen Harriers 25p. HOUNSLOW v. Poole 30p. KETTERING TN v. Boston, Cheltenham 40p. MACCLESFIELD TN v. Sutton Utd 40p. MAIDSTONE UTD v. Wealdstone, Weymouth (GMAC) 50p. MORECAMBE v. Oswestry 30p. MOOR GREEN v. Halesowen (WIC) 30p. NORTH SHIELDS v. Billingham 25p. NUNEATON v. Bedworth 35p. OXFORD CITY v. Grays 30p. PENCAITLAND v. Easthouses (LC), Gala (LC) 20p.

MIDLANDS DIARY

By Steve Pettit of Hednesford.

Full of turkey, mince pies, and vodka, I managed to winch myself out of the armchair on Boxing Day and wobble out to the car, to begin my long and hazardous trek to Blakenall Football Club, all of nine miles from home. For the purists, a mid-morning match at this footballing outpost is a daunting prospect, but I wasn't in the mood to feel either pure or daunted. Having driven past Blakenall's dimunitive ground on numerous occasions in the past, the ground offered little in the way of a surprise for me. No seats, a rusting shelter behind one goal, and a sloping pitch, and that was Blakenall. One thing that did surprise me was the size of the crowd there, as I had been given to understand that Blakenall were one of those clubs who look upon a gate of 50 as a good payday. About four times that number watched the home side lock horns with Harrisons in a real rough and tumble local derby. The hosts lost their goalkeeper, their right winger, and the match, by two goals to one.

Holiday Monday saw me feeling fit (and fat) enough to attempt two matches. Off I went to Redditch United, for their morning match with local rivals Bromsgrove Rovers. Now, I had been led to believe that United's ground wasn't up to much, but I must confess that I was pleasantly surprised on this, my first visit. The ground is by no means exceptional, but does offer the discerning spectator a decent elevated view of the match from at least two sides. Bromsgrove deservedly won 3 - 1, which meant that the Redditch record of not having won a league match at home all season was safe for at least another week or two.

I sadly underestimated the distance from Redditch to Oswestry, which was my planned viewing for the afternoon. By the time I had manouvered my trusty steed away from the Redditch area and through Bromsgrove, I was left with just eighty minutes to reach the Welsh border town via Kidderminster, Bridgnorth, Much Wenlock, and Shrewsbury. A distance of about sixty miles, as I recall. Paying homage to Meat Loaf's famous song, I went like a bat of hell, and managed it with two minutes to spare, leaving behind me a trail of cursing motorists, and a couple of black tyre marks on the roundabout just outside Oswestry. Busting a gut to get there did at least prove worthwhile, as Buxton rapped in four goals and conceded just one in a match which was always interesting to watch. I may well return to Victoria Road before the season's end, as it has a certain higgledy-piggledy charm which will sadly sink beneath developers bulldozers this coming summer. If you haven't managed a trip there yet, it's well worth the effort, particularly as Oswestry may not be able to boast a senior football club next year owing to unforeseen legal problems with the new ground the club had intended occupying.

On New Years Day I again took the cowards way out and went local, this time to Harrisons. I thought I had seen the last of the Christmas turkey, but unfortunately there were twenty two of them on the pitch, and from the way they were all playing I knew there was little chance of seeing either team get stuffed. Halesowen Harriers won by one scrambled goal to nil in a match I've done my best to forget.

The following afternoon I gained ample compensation as I watched a fine Leek Town side defeat Stalybridge Celtic by 2 - 0 at Hamill Park. The pitch was an absolute mud bath, so all credit to both sides for this very good match. I always enjoy my visits to the Peak District, and will undoubtedly return to Hamill Park before too long. It's another ground which offers nothing exceptional in the way of spectator facilities, but has about it an air of charm and expectancy which I found quite infectious. I particularly enjoyed my half hour stay atop the miniature cliff behind the far goal, which was ended only by a sudden squall. One word of warning, if you're planning a trip to Leek Town and you also enjoy meat and potato pies at half time:- take a straw!

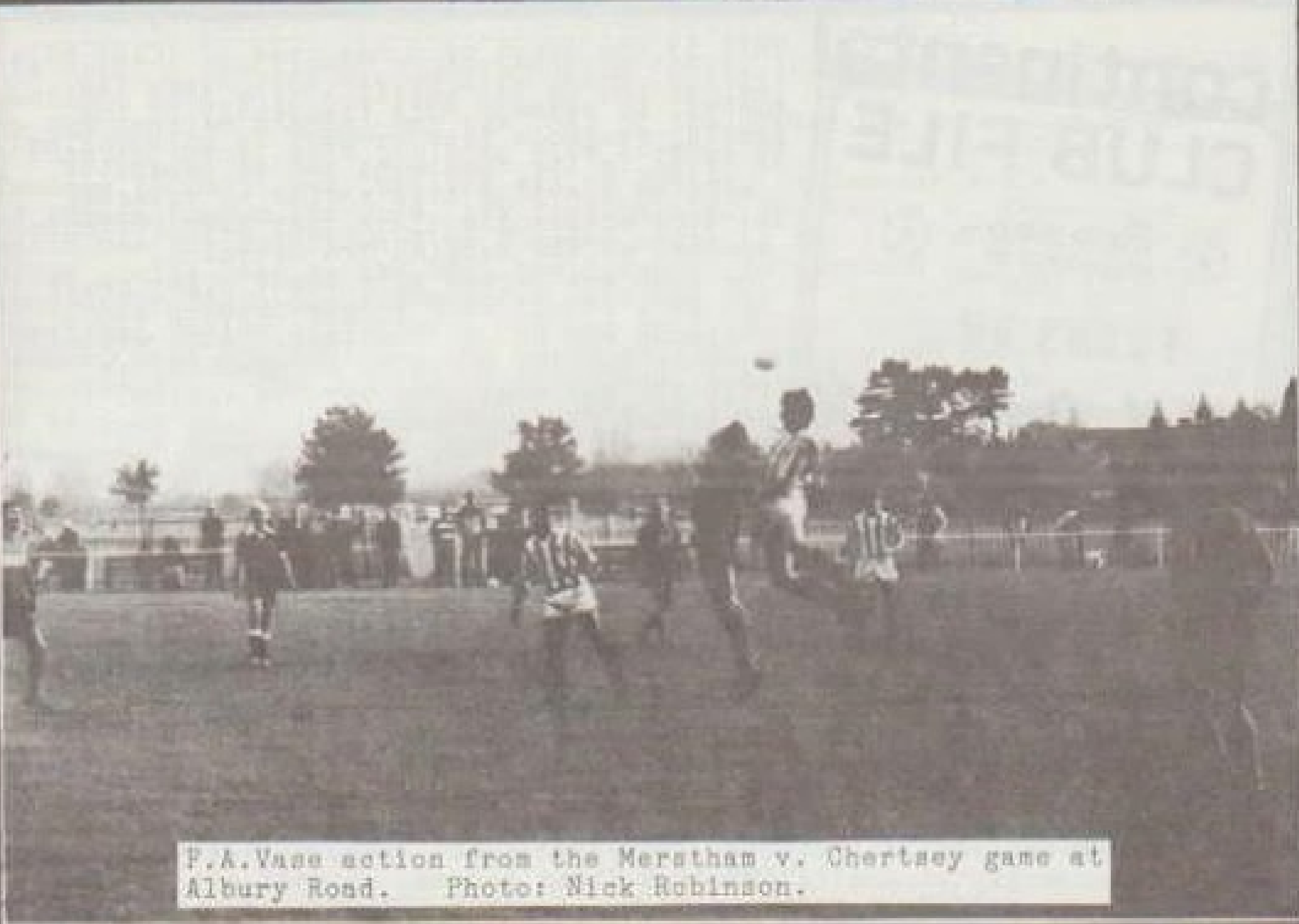
THE **GROUND-HOPPER** MAGAZINE



Dan-Air League action at Horley Town with the visitors Farnham Town on the attack. Farnham won 1-0 (19.12.87). Photo: D R West.



Action from Bromley's 2-0 home win over local rivals Croydon in a V.O.L. Premier game at Hayes Lane (26.12.87). Photo: D R West.



F.A.Vase action from the Merstham v. Chertsey game at Albury Road. Photo: Nick Robinson.



A tense moment in the Lancing v. Eastbourne match at a sunny Culver Road earlier this season. Photo: Nick Robinson.

continental CLUB FILE

THE GROUND-HOPPER MAGAZINE

FOCUS ON....

K.V. Oostende

THIS is the first of a new type of 'Club File' article, which will appear once every few months, or perhaps more frequently if the initial response from readers is encouraging. As trips to the continent can be expensive, I will be starting this series by covering the more accessible clubs like K.V. Oostende, members of the Belgian 3rd Division.
The club was formed only about eight years ago as a result of a merger between A.S. Oostende and K.V.G. Oostende. A.S. Oostende were in the 1st DIvision as recently as 1976-77, but when they were relegated, declining fortunes meant that they decided to merge with K.V.G. in about 1980. However, the new club has spent most of it's short history in Division 3. Getting to the ground is simple so I have not included a map. On arrival at the ferry terminal, walk to the adjacent railway station where you will find a large map of the town on the exterior wall of the public toilets. There are two grounds shown on the map, one marked 'A.S.O', the other marked 'K.V.G. Oostende'. The present club play at the ground marked 'A.S.O', so this is the one you want. It is a 30-minute walk from the ferry terminal. You will have to be quick if you want to catch the 17.45 boat back to Dover after the match. With a bit of luck, you may be able to take the bus which passes near the ground at 16.48.
This season the club are playing all their home games on Sunday's at 15.00; the sole exception was the first home league match on 5th September 1987 which kicked off at 20.00 on Saturday night. The capacity of the ground is probably around 12,000, and there are two main stands joined to each other, and seating 500 in each - on the west side of the ground. The opposite side consists of a narrow covered terrace, while the north end (near the beach) has open terracing in somewhat shoddy conditions. The most modern part of the ground is a large cantilever roof which covers a large terrace behind the south goal. It is a ground good enough for 2nd if not 1st Division football. If you arrive early you can see some wonderful shutters on the ticket office windows, painted in red, yellow and brown - worth taking a colour photo of.
On my visit there this season, admission for the covered standing areas was 160 BF. The club have regularly issued programmes since the merger (and probably before then as well) and this season's issue consists of a staggering 80 pages on glossy paper, for the price of 35 BF. It is more or less A5 sized and as one might expect, the content is mostly advertising. You will have to look <u>very</u> hard for the team line-ups which are well hidden inside! There are plenty of copies being sold outside the ground, although, as is usual in Belgium, most spectators didn't bother to buy copies.
Refreshments are available from a kiosk in the south-west corner of the ground and there are numerous bars, and restaurants opposite the railway station & ferry terminal. A highly recommended visit for a groundhopper, particularly those with a limited budget or those who want to make a gradual start to groundhopping on the continent.
Please let Steve and Ron know whether you would like to see further 'Club-Files' on continental clubs. Readers are, of course, welcome to submit similar articles if they wish. Finally, I must say that I am indebted to 'Hoddy' of Crewe for providing me with the details of the merger.

CHRISTOPHER ASHBRIDGE

Well, can any of our readers supply Club-File articles on individual continental clubs? If so, please send them to us, together with photos of the ground if possible, programme cover, etc, and also maps if available. We will do our best to feature them in future issues.

A MONTH IN EUROPE - BY COLIN PEEL (CONTINUED FROM PAGE 33)

The roof, a cantilever supported from above, is made up of honey-comb like sections with bits sticking out at odd angles. This stand is flanked by two smaller stands, and the rest of the ground has terracing round a running track, with the long side covered by a small cantilever roof.

Tuesday (1 Sept) was our last day in Nantes. Wednesday saw a full list of French League fixtures, but fortunately, the Nantes v. Marseilles match was brought forward to Tuesday night as the live game on Cable TV. After you've been to the Parc des Princes, I recommend you visit the incredible Stade de la Beaujoire next and you'll probably come away a confirmed Nantes supporter. Nantes used to play at the Stade Marcel Saupin, near the station, but moved in 1984 because the Marcel Saupin was too cramped. The Stadium still stands, built in the English style, and it is a solid mass of concrete. One of the stands overhangs the river, not unlike Fulham. The new Stade de la Beaujoire, opened in May 1984, is a triumph of stadium planning and architecture. It is situated on the Northern outskirts of the town, well served by road and public transport. Parking is abundant, as the Stadium is in a 'green-field' site. My ticket cost just £2.50, and I had probably the best value for money at any match I've been to. The entrance is on the West side, and once inside there is a wide space all around the Stadium. There is continuous large-stepped terracing around three sides and proper seating on the West side, all covered by a continuous cantilever roof. The sides rise up from the ends, so that more people can watch from the sides. Rather than stand up on the terraces, supporters in France, Spain and Italy prefer to sit down because the steps are quite deep, unlike our own shallow terracing.

It was a warm evening, and I watched the first-half from behind the South goal, along with Nantes' young hard-core, who call themselves the 'Section Loire Side'. Nantes led 1-0 at half-time, during which I nipped past the steward and found myself a superb seat high up on the East side alongside the half-way line. The atmosphere in the second half was incredible as the teams provided superb entertainment in an attacking match. Nantes, with Mo Johnston prominent, put on a brilliant performance, sending the 25,000 crowd into ecstasy with a 5-0 victory. The only disappointment was the newspaper-style programme, which was poor value at 5F (50p). Finally, I recommend you use 'Situ', a computerised information bank detailing public transport in Nantes. Key in 'Stade de la Beaujoire' and it tells you how to get there and even gives you a print-out. They seem to think of everything.

After Nantes, we went down to Barcelona in Spain and I will be telling you all about this trip in Part 2 of my feature next month, together with some more photographs of the tour. And there will be a final part in the April issue with yet more photos, so keep watching this space.



Nantes' Stade de la Beaujoire. A view of this impressive stadium looking north. No segregation here, but Nantes seem to have no trouble.

THE GROUND-HOPPER MAGAZINE **MARKET PLACE**



FREE FOOTBALL PROGRAMMES

Send 50p in unused stamps (to cover postage, etc.) for a copy of our 87/88 Season Catalogue listing thousands of mint condition programmes available (all reduced in price, including Finals, Semis, Internationals, English, Scottish and Irish League teams, etc.), and receive a Promotional Pack of Programmes (worth over £2.50) FREE.

FREE COLLECTORS KIT

Send £5 (inc. post) for our Special Introductory Bundle (50 programmes, all from different clubs) and receive FREE our Programme Collectors Kit (this contains Membership Card, Hints on Collecting, Programme Pad, Programme Collectors Pen, Pocket Autograph Card, League Club Map and Pitch, Collectors Mug Mat, Stick-on Badge, Gummed Window Strip, Programme Collectors Sticker, Programme Marker and Football Balloon).

BARGAIN BUNDLES

50 Big Match Foreign and Specials, etc.	£10
120 86/87 English League Teams Progs	£10
120 85/86 English League Teams Progs	£10
120 84/85 English League Teams Progs	£10
120 83/84 English League Teams Progs	£10
120 82/83 English League Teams Progs	£10
120 81/82 English League Teams Progs	£10
100 80/81 English League Teams Progs	£10
100 79/80 English League Teams Progs	£10
100 78/79 English League Teams Progs	£10
120 Scottish Teams Programmes	£10

All Prices Include Postage Charges (Extra Required for Overseas Orders)

Special Offer! Six Bargain Bundles £50

Most Orders Returned Within 48 hours

STEVE EARL (GH)
FOOTBALL PROGRAMMES
BROAD ST., BUNGAY,
SUFFOLK NR35 1AH

BULK CLEARANCE! £100 per 10,000. Phone 0986 2621 or 4188 for details.

THE GROUND-HOPPER MAGAZINE

Please mention THE GROUND-HOPPER MAGAZINE *when you write to any of our advertisers*

JOIN THE GROUND-HOPPERS CLUB

JOIN THE GROUNDHOPPERS CLUB NOW!

We are fast approaching 250 members, with more joining all the time!

Members receive a bi-monthly journal, packed with news, info and letters, etc. plus lots more.

Issue 4 contains 24 pages and is out now. To join and receive your Journal, send £3.30 to:-

STEVE PETTIT,
THE GROUNDHOPPERS CLUB,
33 SUNLEY DRIVE,
HEDNESFORD,
STAFFORDSHIRE, WS12 5RF.

THE GROUND-HOPPER MAGAZINE

NON-LEAGUE FOOTBALL
MONTHLY MAGAZINE



NO.1 FOR NON-LEAGUE TABLES, Featuring all Major Semi-Professional Football in ENGLAND SCOTLAND WALES. Including all FA Competitions CUP TROPHY VASE & COUNTY-Now in its 7th successful season. 28 Pages Packed with - Fixtures-Results-Statistics-News & Information -MONTHLY - SEPTEMBER TO MAY - FOR SUBSCRIPTION send Cheque/P.O. for £6-50 + £1 P/P payable to B.N-L.F, 173, LEYTONSTONE ROAD, LONDON, E15 1

NON LEAGUE FOOTBALL FOCUS

The Non-League Monthly crammed with news, features and pictures from the Non-League game including a manager interview and a player, and Club Spotlight each month. £6.80 for all 8 issues or 85p each. Cheques/PO's payable to Non-League Football Focus.

Published by NON LEAGUE FOOTBALL FOCUS

11 HAWTHORN AVENUE, SAWSTON, CAMBS. CB2 4TE

Please send me ___ issues of NON LEAGUE FOOTBALL FOCUS, starting with ___ issue (at 85p per issue inc. p&p) to:-
Mr. ______________________
at ______________________
____

DISPLAY ADVERTS FROM £10

Why not take advantage of our special offer of Display Advertising in Britain's brightest new Non-League monthly?

Interested? Then just look at the rates shown below:–

Quarter Page	
1 issue	£10
3 issues	£27
Half Page	
1 issue	£18
3 issues	£50
Full Page	
1 issue	£35
3 issues	£90

Ideal for Programme Dealers, Club Shops, Souvenir Manufacturers, Football Publication Advertising, etc., etc.

Note: We can prepare the advert for you if you cannot supply a 'camera ready' advert at NO EXTRA COST.

Please make all cheques or postal orders payable to 'Groundhopper Magazine'.

We must have adverts in by 12th of month for it to appear in the next issue. If you cannot supply camera ready advert, please allow a further 3 days (i.e. advert must reach us on 9th of the month to appear in next issue!

Send your advert, remittance and details of issue(s) you want advert to appear to:

Groundhopper Magazine
439 Merton Road
Wandsworth
London, SW18 5LB

Remember, we are on sale at many grounds up and down the country and the advert will be widely read.

MARKET PLACE

THE

GROUND-HOPPER

MAGAZINE

SOUVENIRS BY MAIL ORDER

ALL GOODS ARE FULLY GUARANTEED AND PRICES ARE INCLUSIVE OF POST & PACK

Celebrate the success of our magazine by purchasing our *Exclusive* souvenir range, all of which are endorsed with our logo on. They are all good quality products, fully guaranteed, and all prices are inclusive of p + p. Ordering is simple. Just complete the form below *(plain paper will do if you do not wish to cut your magazine)*, and send it, together with a cheque or postal order, made payable to Groundhopper Magazine to:

Groundhopper Magazine, 439 Merton Road, Wandsworth, London, SW18 5LB

Please allow 7 to 10 days for goods to arrive.

If you are not fully satisfied, please return within 14 days for a full refund.

ITEM A: **LUXURY BINDERS**
"*Groundhopper Magazine*" is not a magazine to be thrown away after it has been read. It is packed with interesting photos, news, features, and interesting facts & figures. That's why we have had these luxury *Groundhopper Magazine* binders made, so that you can keep your copies in mint condition, and readily available for future reference. With these superb de-luxe leather-bonded red binders with magazine logo embossed in gold on spine, you will be able to store your copies so that they build up into a complete bound volume. Each binder is designed to take a whole year's supply (12 issues) with enough room at the back to store your quarterly "**Hopper**"**tunities Discount Club** newsletters if you are a member. 1 binder costs £6.25, 2 binders costs £12.25 or 3 for £18.00.

ITEM B: **ENAMEL MUGS**
Now you can drink to the succes of our magazine with one of our great new *Groundhopper Magazine* drinking mugs. They have an enamel coating, and are red, with a black rim around the outside. On the side is our logo, which is in gold. They look very attractive and will make an ideal gift as well as being used by groundhoppers everywhere. 1 mug costs £2.35, 2 for £4.50, 3 for £6.45 and 4 will cost £8.20.

ITEM C: **GROUNDHOPPER'S NOTEBOOK**
Throw away that old scrap pad! The new exclusive *Groundhopper Magazine* notebook has arrived. These superb chunky notebooks have page after page ready for you to make notes of the match. They come in a selection of colours including black, red, and blue. 1 notebook costs £1.95, 2 for £3.75 or 3 (one of each colour) for £5.00.

ITEM D: **MATCH CARDS**
One of the most frustrating aspects of groundhopping is turning up at the ground only to be told that a programme hasn't been produced for the match. Now with *Groundhopper Magazine* "Match Cards", you can keep a personal record of all the matches that you attend, whether a programme is issued or not. A completed "Match Card" can easily be slipped into your programme collection to complete the set, and even if a programme is issued, why not fill in a "Match Card" anyway and keep it with the programme for a personal reminder of the match, and ground visited. They're printed on thick orange card, folded to normal A5 programme size, and have enough space to fill in information about ground visited, game seen, scorers, team line-ups, officials, etc. They are in pre-packed bags with 10 cards to a set. 1 set costs £1.50, 2 for £2.90, 3 for £4.20 or 4 sets for only £5.40.

ITEM E: **COASTERS**
Treat yourself to a set of these fantastic coasters. Put your drinks on these to give protection to your furniture. They come in a *Groundhopper Magazine* presentation box, and are in sets of six coasters. They are in bonded leather in red, with cork backs, with stamped gold logo on one side. 1 set costs £3.50, 2 sets for £6.75 or 3 for £9.75.

ITEM F: **PENS**
Now you can take these new *Groundhopper Magazine* pens to the match to make your notes on the game. These marvellous ballpoint pens have chrome clips, press stud and nose, and come in yellow, with red logo of the magazine on the barrel. 1 pen costs 50p, 2 pens for 95p, 3 pens for £1.35 or 4 pens for £1.65.

ORDER FORM

I would like to order the following: —

Item A: ..... @ total cost of £..... .....p (inc. p + p)
Item B: ..... @ total cost of £..... .....p (inc. p + p)
Item C: ..... @ total cost of £..... .....p (inc. p + p)
Item D: ..... @ total cost of £..... .....p (inc. p + p)
Item E: ..... @ total cost of £..... .....p (inc. p + p)
Item F: ..... @ total cost of £..... .....p (inc. p + p)
GRAND TOTAL OF MY ORDER IS: £..... .....p

Please deduct £1 if you are a member of the H.D.C. and your order comes to £15 or over. Membership No. ....

All cheques payable to Groundhopper Magazine

NAME..........

ADDRESS..........

....

....

Send your order to: —
GROUNDHOPPER MAGAZINE
439 MERTON ROAD, WANDSWORTH
LONDON, SW18 5LB

Please allow 7 – 10 days for delivery of your order.

NON-LEAGUE ACTION



Ton Pentre striker Micky George breaks free of the Abergavenny defence to put his side 2-0 up in the home Welsh Cup tie at Ynys Park.
Photo: David Collins.



Norman Bell (ex-Wolves), now Asst. Manager of Darwen (and player) on the ball in the white shorts v. Atherton L.R. NW Counties League Div 1 game at Anchor Road, which the visitors won 2-1 on 31.10.87. Photo: S. Jackson.



Notts Alliance action from Basford v. Clifton All Whites. All Whites clear a corner. Photo: Ron Bagshaw.

ACTION PIX



York RI v. Tees Poly. Pass back to the goal-keeper as Poly put on the pressure during their 2-1 win. Photo: Ron Bagshaw.

APPLICATION FORM FOR 12-MONTH SUBSCRIPTION TO

THE
GROUND-HOPPER
MAGAZINE

I would like to take out a 12-month subscription to ***Groundhopper Magazine*** commencing with the .... 198...
issue and enclose the following:

Please tick ( )

☐ £10 plus 12 self-addressed sticky labels.

☐ £7.20 plus 12 stamped addressed envelopes (at least A5 size). Stamps should be for 26p each.

☐ £7.20 plus 12 self-addressed sticky labels and 12 × 26p stamps.

Please Note:
If you are paying £7.20, please ensure that **26p** stamps are provided as we cannot make up the difference if postage is underpaid, and this could cause severe delays in the magazine reaching you each month.

SPECIAL OFFER

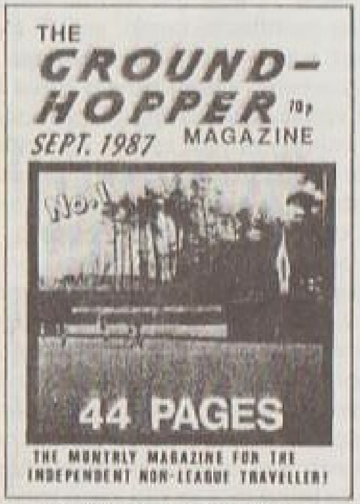
Limited period — while stocks last!

All **new** subscribers will receive **free *Groundhopper Magazine*** ballpoint pen with chrome clip, press-stud and nose in yellow with red magazine logo on the barrel. WORTH 50p.

☐ Please send a sample copy of ***Groundhopper Magazine*** FREE OF CHARGE. 26p in stamps must be enclosed to cover postage.

TAKE OUT A 12-MONTH SUBSCRIPTION *NOW* FOR

THE
GROUND-HOPPER
MAGAZINE



First edition of 'The Groundhopper'

★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★

Now available only on subscription — not available at club shops.

INSIDE

Special Offer + your Subscription Form

These are just a few of the comments we have received about the magazine since our launch in September 1987.

"May I offer my congratulations on what is an excellent and very professional publication."
S.P., Hednesford

"I must say how impressed I am by Groundhopper Magazine."
A.D., Cheshire

"Groundhopper Magazine is the most interesting and enjoyable Non-League magazine now available."
P.G., Cheam, Surrey

"A thousand congratulations. It is so crammed with content and photos."
C.A., Southgate, London

"I must say your magazine is the best value for money publication in both League and Non-League football that I have had the pleasure of reading."
J.B., Walthamstow, London

"I think your magazine is excellent — just what Non-League football needed and I hope it goes from strength to strength."
L.E.K., Chesham, Bucks.

"Congratulations on your new magazine. I was very impressed and look forward to future editions."
M.M., Solihull, West Midlands

"Congratulations on your excellent magazine. I think it makes an interesting and worthwhile contribution to the Non-League scene."
S.C., Basingstoke, Hants.

IF YOU ARE ALREADY A SUBSCRIBER OR DO NOT WISH TO TAKE OUT A SUBSCRIPTION, PLEASE PASS THIS LEAFLET ON TO A FRIEND WHO MAY WISH TO SUBSCRIBE.

Here's what Bryan Horsnell of *Football Monthly* had to say about the magazine recently . . .

THERE IS a growing band of football followers whose hobby is 'collecting' football grounds throughout England!

There are quite a number who have visited every Football League ground in the country and many are now turning their attention to the non-League grounds.

These travelling fans refer to their hobby as 'groundhopping', so it's not surprising that the magazine launched in September, 1987, to cater for this pastime, is called *THE GROUND-HOPPER.*

Editor is Steve King, who used to run the National Badge Club, and he is to be congratulated on producing a first-class 44-page magazine which has something for everybody interested in the non-League scene.

EXCELLENT

As well as non-League news there are features and articles on programmes, badges, clubs, grounds and several excellent illustrations.

One of the contributors of photos to the November issue was 11-year-old Richard Owen, of Tamworth, who has already visited over 200 grounds in all parts of the country!

Many of the more established editors of 'collectors' publications could learn a lot from the quality, design and presentation of this magazine, which is excellent value at 70p.

Copies can be obtained at a number of non-League grounds or, in case of difficulty, a sample copy can be obtained from Groundhopper Magazine, 24 Poplar Road, Wimbledon, London SW19 3JR, for £1 including postage and packing. A subscription for 12 issues costs just £10, including first class postage.

THE GROUND-HOPPER MAGAZINE

Since our launch in September 1987, we have made efforts to provide a quality monthly Non-League football magazine that will appeal to a large number of readers, whether they are 100% fanatical groundhoppers who don't support any particular team or just casual followers of the Non-League scene.

We think that the steady improvements we have made since Issue 1, and the further improvements planned for the months to come, are an indication of how ambitious we are at ***Groundhopper Magazine.*** We want to succeed where others have failed, and we think we will by continuing to produce a quality magazine of varied content to suit all tastes. We will continue to bring Non-League news, programme and badge columns, letters competitions, features and articles on continental groundhopping, and will continue to bring you the very best in action and ground photographs. We will be featuring several Non-League clubs each month in 2-page articles, which are exclusive to ***Groundhopper Magazine.*** These contain photos of the grounds and facilities, programme details, maps, travel details, etc. And our extremely popular souvenir pull-out on a different club each month has been a great success and we will continue to bring this to you each month. We won't become complacent. We aim to make the magazine even better value for money with more photos, new features – in fact, more of everything.

And remember – we are publishing 12-months a year, so your subscription is even better value for money.

If you are still not convinced and would like to see a copy before committing yourself to a subscription, we will send you a *FREE* sample copy. Just send us 26p stamps and indicate on the form, and we'll send you a copy.

STEVE KING
Editor

APPLICATION FORM FOR SUBSCRIPTION

Name ....

Address ....

....

Postcode ....

I enclose a cheque/postal order number .... to the value of £ .... : .... p made payable to *Groundhopper Magazine.*

Please send completed application form, remittance, labels, envelopes/stamps to: – Groundhopper Magazine, Subscriptions (Dept), 24 Poplar Road, Wimbledon, London SW19 3JR.

WARNING

As it is a time-consuming job to type out subscriber's names and addresses on envelopes, we MUST have self-addressed labels or s.a.e.'s with all applications.